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# PREFACE.

THE doctrine of Development, which forms the principal subject of the following pages, has already, in several instances, been so ably and judiciously treated by other writers, that the appearance of the present work seems to require some explanation.

The Theory of Development, as expounded in the remarkable Essay which has recently, from various causes, attracted such general attention, is one which presents so many different aspects and tendencies, that it would afford ample scope to various writers, even if no differences existed amongst them on religious questions. In the present state of things, however, the modes of treating such a subject must necessarily be multiplied by the prevalent diversities of opinion. Writers of a speculative and philosophical turn, will not be likely to adopt the same views of it as other writers whose tendencies are of a more practical description. The mere Protestant, again, or the Evangelical, or the Latitudinarian, will necessarily

contemplate the subject from different points of view. And it need scarcely be added, that those who recognize the authority of the Church, hold principles, which, as far as they operate, must give a character to the inquiry peculiar to themselves.

In addition to this, the *space* which is afforded to the discussion of so wide a question, forms no unimportant consideration, and must exercise a material influence on the character of the inquiry.

These circumstances will convey some notion of the grounds on which it is hoped, that the present work may not be regarded as superfluous by, at least, some portion of the Church. But there are other considerations, of a more general nature, which have influenced the Author in his undertaking, and which he will proceed to explain.

The circumstances under which the Theory of Development has been, for some few years past, gradually insinuating itself in private society, and under which it has, at length, taken a definite shape and consistency in the eyes of the world, have a force and meaning, which are of far greater depth and importance than it is possible to ascribe to the mere publication of Mr. Newman's work, however learned and ingenious that production may be. These circumstances are, first, the uneasy and restless spirit of speculation, which has for several years produced theory after theory on religious subjects, each propounded with consummate boldness and confidence, and each as speedily forgotten, or rejected by its authors. Instability of doctrine on the most impor-

tant subjects, combined with contempt for those who have not been "tossed to and fro with every wind of doctrine," was the natural prelude to the lapse which we have witnessed, and which brings to our minds the language of the Apostle: "They went out from us, for they were not of us."

The Communion to which the party have, for the present at least, united themselves, would have had more reason to felicitate itself on their accession, if they had not, for the most part, avowed, that they had not been led to take such a step by any *examination* of the evidences or claims of the Communion to which they have attached themselves, but simply by the impulses of their moral nature, or their conscience, or some other inward feeling which is entirely distinct from rational inquiry; and which, as it has led them to one Communion, might, with just as much reason, have led them to *any other*.

But these circumstances acquire greater importance when considered in connexion with the spirit of the Age. PROGRESS is the watch-word of philosophy,—of general science,—of the speculative and the practical spirit, alike, in the present day. PROGRESS—DEVELOPMENT,—is the idol of all who go along with the spirit of the Age. And hence arise rash ventures; experiments in religion and in politics; a fever of speculation; and a corresponding indifference, and even hostility to established Doctrines and Institutions. Hence the mere antiquity of Institutions or Laws is urged as a reason for their abolition; while sudden and startling changes of opinion, and

revolutionary innovations, are held to be the surest proofs of enlargement of mind, and conformity to the spirit of the Age.

Such are the characteristics of the times in which Providence has placed us. But to the Christian, these tendencies have a still deeper import, in their relation to the interests of religion itself. Is the spirit of the Age to find an entrance even into the bosom of Christianity? Are we to have *here* also, the same restless speculation; the same temerity; the same innovation; the same sudden changes on the most vital points? We have seen the result of religious speculation in Germany: are we to arrive at the same conclusion?

The Theory of Development, in this point of view, assumes an importance which it is not easy to estimate; and for the same reason, the doctrine of Mysticism, which has recently emanated from the same School, and which, with the apparent or real object of promoting moral culture, assigns CONSCIENCE as the sole judge of religious truth, to the exclusion of all the external evidences of religion, is highly deserving of the attention of the Christian inquirer; not merely from the unhappy consequences to which it has led; but as indicative of the increasing tendency to a merely subjective religion—to the rejection of all external Revelation as binding on our belief.

One leading object of the following pages is, to examine and refute the unsafe theories of Development and Conscience put forth in the writings of Mr. Newman and Mr. Ward. To answer the entire

of these works from point to point, would demand a space which would exceed all due limits; but when the whole design which the author has proposed to himself shall have been completed, he trusts that little in the way of argument will remain in the "Essay on Development," or "the Ideal of a Christian Church," which will not have been noticed.

The design proposed consists of two Parts, the First including an examination of the theories of Development and Conscience recently propounded, together with an argument founded on them, against Romanism; the Second, comprising an argument in behalf of the Catholic system, as it stands distinguished from Romanism on the one hand, and from Rationalism and Anarchy on the other; together with a vindication of this system, as held by our greatest Divines, against the principal objections which have been recently advanced by Latitudinarians, Sectarians, Eclectics, Mystics, and Romanists.

The unexpected length, however, to which the work has extended, and the impossibility of completing the whole design in a single volume, has led to the separate publication of the First Part, which is now submitted to the reader; and which will, it is hoped, be followed, before long, by the remaining Part.

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Page 141, note [m]. *For* c. 5, 8, *read* c. 3—5.

THE

# DOCTRINE OF DEVELOPMENT,

*&c.*

## PART I.

### CHAPTER I.

THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY PROPOSED BY SCRIPTURE AND BY THE ANCIENT APOLOGISTS.

1. It may be safely assumed, as a point of general agreement amongst men, of whatever religious profession they may be, that true religion possesses certain evidences of its truth which do not belong to false religion. This is independent of the opinions which may be held on the question whether religion has been the subject of supernatural revelation. Even those who deny the existence of such a revelation, recognize a sufficient proof of their religious tenets in the innate ideas of the human mind; or in the postulates of practical reason; or in the moral nature of man; or in his feelings, conscience, or some other principle of our nature; and this subjective evidence induces them to reject all other forms of religion as false or absurd. On whatever external proofs religion may be accepted by those

who admit them,—whether they arise from tradition, or authority, or the weight of facts, or testimony, or philosophical reasoning, or internal harmony and beauty,—still in all cases it is held, that truth, whatever it may be, has a firmer argumentative basis, a clearer and more demonstrative proof and evidence, than error can possess. We are Christians, if we be deserving of the name, (*i. e.* if our belief rests on any conviction of the profound importance and necessity of true religion,) because we are satisfied, for some reason or other, that Christianity is the only true religion,—that no other religion has the same amount of evidence in its favour. We may not be able, from circumstances, to draw out scientifically the proofs of our faith; we may not be prepared to answer all the objections which its opponents may advance; but we are, at least, convinced that there are such proofs, and that they are sufficient for the subversion of whatever may be advanced by its enemies in support of different systems.

Now, in considering the evidences of Christianity, our attention is naturally drawn, in the first instance, to those on which its Founders themselves rested its claims.

2. Admitting, then, that the Gospel appeals to an internal or subjective evidence in the human mind enlightened by the Spirit of God[a], which constitutes to each individual an essential foundation of his faith; it is still undeniable that, in addition to this subjective evidence, Christianity possesses proofs

[a] 1 John ii. 20, 27; Ephesians i. 13, 14, iii. 17—19; 2 Timothy i. 12; Revelation ii. 17.

and tokens of its truth, which are addressed more immediately to the reasoning faculties. Our Lord himself declares that a religion without such evidences has no claims on our acceptance. "If I had not done among them the works which none other man did, they had not had sin." And again: "If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true. There is another that beareth witness of me . . . But I have greater witness than that of John: for *the works* which the Father hath given me to finish, the same works that I do, bear witness of me, that the Father hath sent me. And the Father himself, which hath sent me, hath borne witness of me . . . Search *the Scriptures* . . they are they which *testify of me*." Nicodemus was thus satisfied of our Lord's Divine mission: "We know that thou art a teacher come from God; for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him[b]." The woman of Samaria reasoned in the same way: "Come, see a man which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ[c]?" Of the apostles we read: "They went forth and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them, and *confirming the word* with signs following[d]." St. Paul's preaching was, "not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in *demonstration of the Spirit and of power*, that your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God[e]." Our Lord himself opened the Scriptures for his disciples, saying, "Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day; and that repentance

[b] John xv. 24; v. 31—39; iii. 2.
[c] John iv. 29.
[d] Mark xvi. 20.
[e] 1 Cor. ii. 4, 5.

and remission of sins should be preached among all nations[f]." And this proof of his Divine mission was always afterwards employed by Christians. Thus Peter appeals to the prophecies of Joel and David[g]. He afterwards refers to Moses, Samuel, and the other prophets in proof of Christianity[h]. St. Paul proves from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ[i]. His "custom" was to reason out of the Scriptures[j]. Apollos "mightily convinced the Jews and that publicly, showing *by the Scriptures* that Jesus was Christ[k]." Christianity, amidst all its rejection of the "science falsely so called" of the Grecian philosophy, did not shrink from inquiry and proof. The Bereans are commended "as more noble than those of Thessalonica, in that they received the word with all readiness of mind, and *searched the Scriptures daily, whether those things were so:* therefore many of them believed[l]." St. Peter directs us to "be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us *a reason* of the hope that is in us[m];" and reminds us, that "we have not followed cunningly devised fables[n]." Throughout the whole of the New Testament, in fact, it is manifest that Christianity professed to be supported by clear and striking evidences of a supernatural character. If the Scripture be credible,—if it be an authentic record of the ministry of our Lord and his disciples, it sufficiently proves, that Christianity claims such external evidences of its truth as belong to no other religion in the world.

[f] Luke xxiv. 46, 47.
[g] Acts ii.
[h] Acts iii.
[i] Acts ix. and xiii.
[j] Acts xvii. 2.
[k] Acts xviii. 28.
[l] Acts xvii. 11, 12.
[m] 1 Peter iii. 15.
[n] 2 Peter i. 15.

3. Christianity then was placed by its Founders on an argumentative basis, *i. e.* it was to rest its claims on proofs or evidences addressed to the reason. It is not meant, of course, that all individuals alike could comprehend the force of these proofs, or were bound to examine them in detail, before they received the Gospel. All that is meant is, that the Gospel was provided with rational evidences of its truth. A learned theologian of the Roman communion has justly observed, that "those who are *without*, are first led, and, as it were, prepared for faith, by *reason*. For God employs natural motives, in order to introduce faith to the minds of men. For, hence it was, that He set forth eye-witnesses of his resurrection, and united miracles to teaching, in order, that is, that the apostles might persuade their hearers to believe, not only by words, but also by works; as Epiphanius teaches, and Ambrose, who saith, 'Power is the witness of doctrine, that the preaching which was incredible to the world might become credible by actions.' And Beda, 'The power of miracles being first given, he sent them to preach the kingdom of God, that the power manifested, might give credit to their words.' Therefore by signs and miracles the way is prepared to faith, through the senses and reason[o]."

That human reason cannot without absurdity pretend to reject an acknowledged Revelation is most certain; but the exercise of reason in investigating the claims of any religious system to be a Revelation,

[o] Melchior Canus, Loci Theol. lib. ix. c. vi: "Adducuntur primum ratione exteri ad fidem, et quasi præparantur. . . . signis ergo et miraculis via fidei per sensus et rationem sternitur."

is indispensable. Even Augustine, while founding the faith and reason of the Christian on *authority*, maintains the necessity of reason to determine *what* authority we are to submit to[p]; and while he puts before unbelievers the claims of Christianity, he bases them so entirely on reason, that he leaves inquirers at liberty to seek elsewhere for truth, if the proofs afforded by Christianity are insufficient[q].

4. No true believer, then, can doubt that Christianity had really sufficient evidences of its truth, at the beginning at least. Thus much must be conceded by every Christian. And if this be the case, *true* Christianity must at all times be able to appeal to rational and external evidences, or proofs of its truth. This must be admitted by all who consider Christianity to be a system intended for *permanency*, and for general adoption. If Christianity was at the beginning placed on a rational and argumentative basis, it cannot now dispense with this basis, and permit other religions or doctrines to lay claim to a superior evidence of their truth. It must, on the

[p] "Auctoritas fidem flagitat, et rationi præparat hominem. Ratio ad intellectum cognitionemque perducit. Quanquam neque auctoritatem ratio penitus deserit, cum consideratur cui sit credendum." De Vera Relig. c. xxiv. See also his treatise, De Utilitate Credendi, where the authority of the Catholic Church is proved from its external evidences.

[q] "Nostrum est considerare quibus, vel hominibus, vel libris, credendum sit ad colendum recte Deum, quæ una salus est. Hujus rei prima disceptatio est, utrum iis potius credamus qui ad multos deos, an iis qui ad unum Deum colendum nos vocant. Quis dubitet eos potissimum sequendos qui ad unum vocant, præsertim cum illi multorum cultores, de hoc uno Domino cunctorum et rectore consentiant, et certe ab uno incipit numerus? Prius ergo isti sequendi sunt, qui unum Deum summum solum verum Deum, et solum colendum esse dicunt. Si apud hos veritas non eluxerit, tum demum migrandum est." De Vera Relig. c. xxv.

contrary, be capable of *proving* its truth by some sufficient evidences, and of refuting the claims of false religions. Let us now see how far this was realized in the first ages of the Church, and in later times.

The systems opposed to Christianity have always been referrible to one or other of three classes: first, Philosophy, which bases religion on speculation, or abstract reasoning; secondly, Heathenism, which deduces from tradition the worship of false gods; and thirdly, Judaism. How then did Christianity maintain its cause against these various systems? Did it refuse to permit inquiry into its evidences; or confess that those evidences were not addressed to reason? A brief survey of some of the principal arguments of the ancient apologists, will furnish the best reply to these questions.

5. The earliest treatise which we possess, and which argumentatively establishes the truth of Christianity, is the Apology of Justin Martyr, which begins by urging the claims of *truth*, in preference to mere established opinions: "Reason," he says, "teaches us, that those who are truly pious and philosophical, honour and love *the truth* alone, and refuse to follow the opinions of the ancients, if they are evil[r]." On this principle, Justin proceeds to show the falsehood of the existing idolatrous systems, arguing that the gods of the heathen were not really gods, and that this had been proved by the philosophers[s]: and he remarks on the unworthy and degraded notions which

[r] Justin Martyr, Apolog. i. p. 4, ed. Thirlby.

[s] Justin Martyr, Apolog. i. p. 10, &c. ed. Thirlby. See Tertullian, Apologet. c. x.—xv. Euseb. Præpar. Evangel. lib. i.—vi. Lactantius, Inst. Div.

the heathens entertained of their deities. The Christian apologists in this line of argument, and generally in their demonstration of the falsehood and absurdity of the heathen mythology, had little more to do than to avail themselves of the arguments and the materials supplied to them by Cicero in his treatise "De Natura Deorum," in which the heathen deities are proved to have been human beings, and the contradictions and uncertainty of the popular mythology are exhibited in a very striking manner[t].

Justin Martyr, in replying to the objections of the Heathens against Christianity, quotes largely from the Gospels, with a view to show the purity of the morality taught by Jesus Christ; and he appeals to the prophecies of the old Testament in which the miraculous events of our Saviour's life on earth are predicted, in order to prove that those miracles were not performed by magic, as the opponents of Christianity pretended[u]. It may be remarked, that Irenæus and Lactantius also appeal to the Prophecies in proof of the Divine origin of the Christian miracles[v]. Justin anticipates the objection, that these Prophecies were delivered after the events they predict, by reference to the fact of the Septuagint version (from which his citations are taken) having been made nearly three centuries before the birth of our Lord. To show that our Lord actually did work miracles, as the

[t] These arguments of the Christian apologists are exactly applicable to the heathen systems of the present day. See instances in Ritter, Anc. Phil. i. 93; Elphinstone's India, i. 187; Wilson, Vishnu Purana, xliii. 25, 27, 72, &c. in which the deities of the Hindus are represented as liable to human passions, and of limited existence.

[u] Just. Mart. Apolog. i. p. 48.

[v] Irenæus, lib. ii. c. 32. Lactant. v. 3.

Christians believed, an appeal is made to the public Acts written in the time of Pontius Pilate, governor of Judæa[w].

It will have been seen from this, that Justin Martyr establishes the truth of Christianity, not on merely subjective evidence, but on the rational foundation of history and matter-of-fact, and not by any system of abstract reasoning. His appeal is throughout to common sense and reason, against a merely traditionary system of mythology unsustained by any rational proofs or evidences. "We might," he says, "add many other prophecies, but we refrain from so doing, being of opinion that these are sufficient to persuade those persons who have ears to hear and understand, and to enable them to perceive that we [Christians] do not speak merely like those who relate fables of the pretended children of Jupiter, and who cannot *prove* them[x]." The evidences of Christianity are, he adds, "sufficient to cause a *reasonable belief* and persuasion in those who love *the truth*, and who are not vain-glorious or passionate; but those who teach the fables of the poets [i. e. the mythology of heathenism] *bring no proof* to the young persons whom they instruct[y]." In dealing with philosophy, which professed by the force of mere reasoning to attain to a full knowledge of God and of religion, Justin demonstrates its inefficacy for these purposes[z]; and in meeting the objection of unbelievers, that Christians had been deceived by vain and unfounded rumours about Christ, he says, that "if there be a willingness to hear the *reason* of this thing," it will

[w] Justin Martyr, p. 71.
[x] Ib. p. 77.
[y] Ib. p. 79.
[z] Justin Mart. Dialog. cum Tryph. p. 143, &c.

be shown "that we have not been in error." For, "if you will attend, I will demonstrate that we have not relied on empty fables, or unproved assertions[a]."

6. It was indeed the continual declaration of the early Christian writers, that the heathen religions were wholly destitute of rational proofs; that they were mere fables of the poets, or fictions of the imagination. And these statements were perfectly borne out by facts. If we examine the foundations of the extinct polytheism, we find no other proofs of its mythological systems, except the writings of the poets, which evidently furnish no certain historical evidence. History commenced long after the origin of polytheism[b], and merely attested its existence; and no sacred books of any of its extinct systems were in the hands of the world, supported by any evidences of their antiquity and their authenticity. We may say nearly the same of the existing systems of paganism. Either they are without historical records, as in the case of the Feticism of the more barbarous tribes; or when they possess sacred books, as the Brahmins, Buddhists, and Dualists certainly do, those books are wholly destitute of historical proofs of their authenticity[c]. Ancient as some of these books unquestionably are, there is no evidence of their truth: they are as unsupported by proof as the genealogies of the gods in Hesiod, or their quarrels, marriages, and feasts, in Homer or Virgil.

Athenagoras remarks on this contrast between

[a] Dial. cum Tryph. p. 153, 4.

[b] Euseb. Demonstr. Evangelica; Stillingfleet, Origines Sacræ.

[c] See Wilson, Vishnu Purana, Lectures before the Univ. of Oxford; Elphinstone's India, vol. i.; Grant, Bampton Lectures; Ritter, Hist. Philos.; Bergier, Traité de la Vraie Relig. t. i.

Christianity and false religion. "How is it," he says, speaking of the philosophers, "that *they* may lawfully write and speak with freedom of God, while the law is against us, who can *prove*, by most real signs and reasons, that we are right in our opinion and belief that there is only one God[d]?" But while he thus places Christianity on the argumentative and strictly rational foundation of *fact*, he admits that many Christians were unable to produce the logical grounds of their faith. "Private persons amongst us, artificers, old women, who perhaps could not by reasoning demonstrate the utility of their [Christian] profession, show it practically and by their works: they do not recite prepared orations, or reckon words, but they are examples of good deeds and virtues[e]." This must, of course, be the case in any religion which is not destined merely for the cultivated and the intellectual, but for the indigent and unlearned; and this alone is sufficient to prove that philosophy was never intended to become the foundation of religion to mankind. Any religious system founded on mere reasonings must necessarily be adapted to the comprehension of a very few persons; and accordingly philosophy has in every age restricted itself to a peculiar class of minds, leaving the world at large to follow what it holds to be false in religion. Whereas Christianity has always been of a universal character, extending itself to all classes and degrees of society equally. "We do not desire vain-glory," says Tatian, in allusion to the philosophy of Greece, "we follow the

[d] Athenag. Apolog. Bibl. Max. Patr. tom. iii. p. 149.

[e] Ibid. p. 150.

law of the father of incorruption, and reject all that is connected with human glory: our philosophy is not merely for the rich.....We receive all who desire to listen to us, even if they be old women or children[f]."

7. The Christian writers generally assumed the existence of God as a principle which all nations agreed in admitting, as Cicero attests: "Nam nulla gens est, neque tam immansueta, neque tam fera, quæ non, etiamsi ignoret qualem Deum habere deceat, tamen habendum sciat[g]." Yet, when philosophy, or a gross and material polytheism, denied the existence of the true God, Christianity did not fear to appeal to the structure and order of the material world, as an evidence of the being of an Eternal Author and Governor of the universe[h]. This argument, which modern transcendentalism rejects, and

[f] Tatian, Orat. ad Græc. p. 110, ed. Worth.

[g] Cicero de Legibus, ii. 8. See also de Nat. Deor. i. 43, 44; Lactantius, i. 2. This subject is considered by Stillingfleet, Orig. Sacræ, bk. iii. c. i. § x.—xii. bk. i. c. i. Bayle denies the fact, but has been refuted by Bergier, Traité de la Vraie Relig. ii. 454, &c.

[h] This argument had been employed by heathen philosophy. Cicero (De Natura Deorum, ii.) says, "Quid potest esse tam apertum tamque perspicuum, cum cœlum suspeximus, quam esse aliquod numen præstantissimæ mentis, quo hæc reguntur?" And his reasoning is thus employed by Lactantius: "Nemo est enim tam rudis, tam feris moribus, quin oculos suos in cœlum tollens, tametsi nesciat cujus Dei providentia regatur hoc omne quod cernitur, non aliquam tamen esse intelligat ex ipsa rerum magnitudine, motu, dispositione, constantia, utilitate, pulchritudine, temperatione: nec posse fieri, quin id, quod mirabili ratione constat, consilio majori aliquo sit instructum." Divin. Inst. lib. i. c. 2. This argument is, in fact, urged in holy Scripture itself: "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handywork," Ps. xix.; and St. Paul refers to it, Rom. i. 20. See also Ps. viii. Isaiah xl. 21. Jerem. xiv. 22. Matt. vi. 25. Acts xiv. 15, 17. xvii. 24, 25.

which modern theology is sometimes reluctant to avail itself of[i], was employed without scruple by Minucius Felix, Athanasius, Gregory Nazianzen, Basil, Gregory Nyssen, and the Fathers in general[j]. Theophilus of Antioch, in reply to those heathens who denied the existence of the true God, and required of the Christians to *show* Him to them, remarks, that we cannot see God with our eyes; but that we may know His existence by His providence and His works: "It is believed that there is an emperor on earth, though he is not seen by all; but he is known by his laws, his ordinances, his authorities, powers, and images. And wherefore will not you know God by His works and the effects of His power[k]?" The Fathers employed this argument from the order and harmony of the material universe, not only to establish the existence of God against Atheists, but also in proof of the *unity* of God against the Gentiles[l].

The ignorance and contradictions of the heathen philosophers and poets on the subject of the Deity were demonstrated by Theophilus of Antioch, and Clement of Alexandria, Athenagoras, Lactantius, &c.[m], as they had been by Justin Martyr, and were in after-ages by Augustine[n].

[i] A recent writer rejects this argument, as tending to engender *pride*, and bases the proof of the existence of God on consciousness. See Ward's Ideal, p. 509; see also p. 499. Modern philosophy, since the time of Des Cartes, has in general adopted nearly the same procedure.

[j] Athanasius, Cont. Gent. p. 27, 28. Gregor. Naz. Orat. 28; Greg. Nyss. lib. de Hom. Opif.; Basil, Hom. vii. viii. in Hexaem. See also Petav. lib. i. c. i.

[k] Theophil. Antioch. ad Autolyc. lib. i.

[l] Athanasius, Contra Gentes, tom. i. p. 28, &c. Lactantius, Epitome, c. ii. Origen, Cont. Cels. c. i.

[m] Theophil. ad Autolycum, lib. ii. Clemens, Liber Cohort. ad Gentes. Athanasius, adv. Gentes. Lactant. Divin. Inst.

[n] De Civitate Dei.

8. Origen, in his treatise against Celsus, establishes the truth of Christianity, not on mere abstract reasoning, but on the evidence of *facts, i. e.* his miracles as recorded in the New Testament, the prophecies which predicted his coming, the morality of his disciples, and the propagation of the Christian religion[o]. In reply to those who contended that religion should always be grounded on philosophical reasonings, he remarks, that if it were possible for men to relinquish the affairs of this life, and apply themselves to profound inquiries, it would be very desirable; but that belief without strict examination is necessary for men in general, who have no leisure or capacity for lengthened inquiry[p]. For, as he remarks, in reference to 1 Cor. i. 21, "We do not speak of 'foolishness,' simply, as good, but of foolishness in regard to *this* world....According to our teaching, it is much more desirable to be persuaded of doctrines by reason and wisdom than by simple faith;" but the latter was allowed by the Word, in order "that men in general might receive advantage[q];" and though Christians apply themselves to the instruction of those with whom reasoning is of little use, they are equally desirous of receiving those who are learned, and qualified to examine[r]. "It must be added," he says, "that the Word has a demonstration peculiar to itself, and more divine than that which is founded on the dialectic of the Greeks: this is called by the Apostle the 'demonstration of the Spirit and of power;' 'of the Spirit,' *i.e.* by the *prophecies*, which are sufficient to cause belief in any one, especially in what con-

[o] Origen adv. Cels. lib. i. ii. vii. Oper. t. i.
[p] Lib. i. p. 327, 328.
[q] Lib. i. p. 331.
[r] Lib. iii. p. 479.

cerns Christ; and 'of power,' *i. e.* by *miracles*, which are proved to have taken place, as in many other ways, so by the traces (ἴχνη) which are still preserved amongst those who live according to the precepts of the Word[s]." Having argued that in matters of history it is sometimes difficult to afford evident and undeniable proofs of undoubted matters of fact, he applies this to the Gospel history, "not, however, as inviting *intelligent* persons to a mere unreasoning faith, but as showing that there is need of candour and application[t]." "Some Christians," he says, "are unable to give a reason for their religion," but others can do so "in a solid, profound" manner[u]. Origen establishes the credibility of the Scripture history in precisely the same way which the advocates of Christianity adopt at the present day, in argument with Rationalists or Deists.

9. Eusebius, in the "Præparatio Evangelica," adopted the same arguments which preceding writers had employed so successfully. The object of this work, as stated at the commencement, is, that "whereas some are of opinion that Christianity is defended by *no reason*," but that its adherents have received it "with an unreasoning faith, and an uninquiring spirit; and assert, that no clear proof demonstrates the truth of the things which are premised, but that converts give heed to faith only;" it is desirable to *demonstrate* the truth of the Gospel[v]. Athanasius wrote his treatise against the Gentiles, in order that "no one should suspect belief in Christ to be *unreasonable*, as the Greeks unjustly think it to be[w]."

[s] Lib. i. p. 320, 321.
[t] Lib. i. p. 358.
[u] Lib. iii. p. 471.
[v] Euseb. Præp. Evan. l. i. c. i.
[w] Athanasius, Orat. Contra Gentes, init.

The Divine origin of Christianity is argued by Arnobius from the miracles of our Lord and of his disciples recorded in Holy Scripture[x]. In reply to those who denied the truth of the facts, he says: "You do not believe that these things were done. But those who actually saw them done, and were eye-witnesses, most excellent witnesses, most certain narrators, believed them themselves, and have transmitted them to posterity as credible, with no insignificant assurances. And what are these? Tribes, people, nations, yea the unbelieving part of mankind; for unless they had been manifest and clearer than the day, men would never have yielded their believing assent to these things[y]." "If," he continues, "the history of these things be false, why was the whole world in so short a time filled with that religion?... Were they enticed by mere assertions, and led into empty hopes, and induced rashly to place their lives in peril, when they had seen no miracle which by its novelty should incite them to that worship[z]?"

10. The existence of one God only is proved against the Polytheists by Lactantius, not only from the order and harmony of the material world, and from other reasons[a], but by the authority of the Prophets, whose Divine inspiration he demonstrates by the fulfilment of their predictions[b]. Having shown the absurdity of the heathen superstitions and idolatries[c], he thus addresses himself to those who adhered to paganism from a feeling of reverence for its antiquity: "It is especially necessary, then, in what con-

[x] Arnobius, Adv. Gentes, lib. i. c. 45, 46, 50.
[y] Ibid. c. 54.
[z] Lib. i. c. 55.
[a] Lactantius, Divin. Instit. lib. i. c. 2.
[b] Lib. i. c. 4.
[c] Lib. ii.

cerns the regulation of life, to have confidence in ourselves, and to depend on our own judgments and senses, to investigate and weigh the truth, and not to be deceived through belief in the errors of others, as if we were devoid of reason. God has given sense to all in equal portion, that they may investigate what has not been heard, and weigh what has been. Nor did they, because they preceded us in time, excel us in sense, which, if it be given equally to all, cannot have been monopolized by our predecessors. ....Wherefore as wisdom, that is, searching after truth, is natural to all men, those persons deprive themselves of wisdom, who without any judgment approve the inventions of their forefathers, and are led by others like a flock of sheep[d]."

Christianity then, in those ages never shrank from reason and inquiry: it was, on the contrary, earnest in its endeavours to promote a full and fair examination of existing systems of religion, and a comparison of their evidences with its own. It is true that Christianity appealed to tradition, but this tradition was of a wholly different nature from that of the heathen: it was historically proved; it rested on a historical basis; it was corroborated by documentary evidence; while the heathen tradition was merely fabulous.

Lactantius argues against philosophy as a guide to religion, from its contradictions and divisions; and from the confessions of the most eminent of the philosophers of their ignorance in regard to the chief articles of religion[e]. And he afterwards remarks that

[d] Lib. ii. c. 7.

[e] Lib. iii. The following searching remarks of this writer are of general application, not only to the ancient but to the modern philosophy: "In mul-

it is entirely devoid of authority or proof; that it rests on conjectures, and is liable to endless doubts and questions[f].

His direct proofs of the truth of Christianity are deduced from the fulfilment of the prophecies of the Old Testament, and from the historical facts narrated in the New Testament[g]. Paganism is thus contrasted with Christianity. "If you were to ask of them the reason for their persuasion, they could not render any, but must take refuge in the judgment of their ancestors—that *they* were wise, *they* approved, and knew what was best—and must deprive themselves of sense, and reason, while they believe the errors of others." ... "Let them," he continues, "invite us to a conference, exhort us to receive the worship of

tas sectas philosophia divisa est: et omnes varia sentiunt. In qua ponimus veritatem? In omnibus certe non potest. Designemus quamlibet: nempe in cæteris omnibus sapientia non erit. Transeamus ad singulas: eodem modo, quicquid uni dabimus, cæteris auferemus. Unaquæque enim secta omnes alias evertit, ut se suaque confirmet: nec ulli alteri sapere concedit, ne se desipere fateatur: sed sicut alias tollit, sic ipsa quoque ab aliis tollitur omnibus . . . Cum omnia igitur incerta sint, aut omnibus credendum est, aut nemini . . . Si ergo singulæ sectæ multarum sectarum judicio stultitiæ convincuntur, omnes igitur vanæ atque inanes reperiuntur: ita seipsam philosophia consumit et conficit. Quod cum intelligeret Arcesilas Academiæ conditor, reprehensiones omnium inter se collegit, confessionemque ignorantiæ clarorum philosophorum; armavitque se adversus omnes." Cap. 4. Are not the divisions of modern philosophy preparing the way for a new Academic and Pyrrhonic philosophy?

[f] "Ad verum frequenter accedunt; sed nihil ponderis habent illa præcepta, quia sunt humana, et auctoritate majori, id est divina illa, carent. Nemo igitur credit, quia tam se hominem putat esse, qui credit, quam est ille qui præcipit. Præterea nihil apud eos certi est, nihil quod a scientia veniat. Sed cum omnia conjecturis agantur, multa etiam diversa, et varia proferantur, stultissimi est hominis, præceptis eorum velle parere; quæ utrum vera sint an falsa, dubitatur." Lib. iii. c. 27.

[g] Lib. iv.

their gods, persuade us that there are many gods by whose deity and providence the world is governed: let them show the origin and commencement of their rites, and how delivered to men: let them explain their source and reason—show what is the reward of obedience, what the penalty of contempt, why they desire to be worshipped by men.... All of which let them confirm, *not by their own assertions*, (for the authority of man is of no avail,) but by some *Divine testimonies, as we do*.... If their reason be true, let it be produced: we are prepared to hear, if they instruct us: we do not believe those who are silent, or yield to those who are violent. Let them imitate us, or declare the reason of the whole matter. For we do not *entice*, as they object; but we *teach, prove, demonstrate*. Wherefore no one is retained by us against his will[h]."

11. I shall not now proceed further, though Augustine's Treatise "De Civitate Dei," and Cyril of Alexandria's work against Julian, afford many tempting illustrations of the method uniformly pursued by the Christians in their defence of true religion. I would only remark, in conclusion, that from what has been said, it is clear that Christianity is, both by the Scriptures and by the early Christian writers, based on strictly *rational* grounds of faith. It is not placed on mere tradition, as the heathen systems were; still less is it made dependent on philosophical speculation: but it is made to rest on the evidence of *facts*. This is a species of proof which lies open to the most ordinary comprehension; and its force may be estimated from the unexampled circumstance of the

[h] Lib. v. c. 19.

conversion of all nations to the Gospel, without external compulsion. None of the heathen religions ever acquired by its mere inherent force, a triumph over former established systems of idolatry. Mahommedanism owes its success to the sword: Christianity alone has prevailed over idolatrous and false religions, by the external evidences of its truth, as well as by the purity and perfection of its doctrine.

There could not well be a greater mistake than to imagine, that Christianity shrinks from the fullest inquiry, or refuses to enter on a demonstration of its authority. It is, and always has been, its office, to excite inquiry, and to satisfy it. What Bossuet has observed of the Church may be applied to Christianity in general. "Voilà l'ordre: l'*examen* . . à ceux qui n'estant point dans l'église, n'ont point encore d'autorité qui les règle; soumission sans examiner à ceux qui estant déja dans l'église, n'ont qu'à écouter ses décrets[i]." True religion has evidences and proofs: false religion has none. The advocates of Christianity need have no fear for their cause, even when assailed by philosophy, or the pride of infidel learning. The proofs which God Himself has supplied of its truth, and which our Lord and his Apostles, and the Christian Fathers and Apologists, employed, will be always found effectual, if rightly used, to secure the triumph of Revelation.

[i] Bossuet, Conf. avec M. Claude, p. 139.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY AS RELATED TO ROMANISM.

1. We have seen in the preceding Chapter, that Christianity was by its Divine Founder and his apostles, and their successors, placed on a strictly rational foundation; that it was supported by external proofs and evidences founded on matters of *fact*, and such as commended themselves at once to the apprehension and the reasoning faculties. The proof of the truth of Christianity was derived, first, from the predictions of the Prophets, who had announced by the Spirit of God the advent of the Saviour, and had minutely described the particulars of his birth, ministry, and death. It was derived, secondly, from the history of our Lord's life—the miraculous events which announced his Divine Nature, his Heavenly commission, his Almighty power and wisdom—the prophecies which he delivered, and which were afterwards fulfilled—the similar powers of miracles and prophecy which He conferred on his disciples. It was derived, thirdly, from the purity and excellence of the Christian doctrines, when compared with those of other religions. The reality of these things was shown, by varied and numerous historical evidences

establishing the authenticity of the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. Such, in a few words, was the argument for the truth of Christianity[a]; and such is the argument which still continues to be adduced, in a somewhat more complex form, by defenders of Christianity, and, amongst others, by writers of the Roman Communion. Infidelity has, doubtless, not remained content with the objections which heathen philosophy and superstition originally advanced against the Gospel; and it has in modern times busied itself in attempting to demonstrate that the Revelation of any religion was superfluous; that Revelation is absolutely impossible; that human testimony to facts is not to be relied on; that we cannot depend on the evidence of our senses, and that all existence is ideal: or it has been occupied in endeavouring, by a perverted and worthless criticism, to find internal evidences of forgery, interpolation, or contradiction, in the historical documents of the Gospel. These attempts, of course, have introduced some additional matter into the defence of Christianity; but its positive proofs always remain the same; and it is with these positive proofs that I am now concerned.

2. If we were to place reliance on the assertions of Romanists, we should at once conclude, that the defence of Christianity could only be conducted on their peculiar principles. It is, in fact, generally taught in the Roman Communion, that there is no alternative between the implicit reception of all Romish tenets,

[a] I omit here all consideration of the accessory and merely probable evidences, arising from the rapid and extensive diffusion of Christianity, the deaths of confessors and martyrs, the virtues of its adherents, &c.

and absolute infidelity. And the reason assigned for this is, that Scripture is capable of so many different interpretations, that its real meaning cannot be determined, except by the infallible authority of the Church; and that its authenticity and genuineness are also subject to so many difficulties, that they can only be demonstrated by the same authority. Hence it is taught, that if the infallibility of the Church be doubted, faith has no foundation whatever. The necessity of implicit faith in the decisions of the Church is argued, from the total incapacity of human reason to arrive at truth by means of the Scriptures. Much ingenious and plausible argument has been employed by Romanists, for three centuries, in establishing these conclusions, which have undoubtedly led to the conversion of many individuals to their communion. No one can for a moment dispute the subtilty of their reasoning on this point. It is, in fact, the foundation of their system: the whole of that system depends upon it.

3. I must adduce a few examples of the arguments by which the majority of Romish theologians have laboured to show that the *Scripture* is an unsafe guide to men in their search after religious truth; and that recourse must be had to the infallible *authority of the living Church.* Dr. Milner, whose writings have met with universal approbation in the Romish Communion, contends for the necessity of an infallible living judge of controversy on the following grounds. The rule of faith or "method appointed by Christ for finding out the true religion," must, he argues, be "certain and unerring," *i. e.* it must not be "liable to lead any rational and sincere inquirer into inconsistency or error;" and

it must be "universal," *i. e.* "proportioned to the abilities and circumstances of the great bulk of mankind." Now, it is plain that the *private inspiration* of individuals, which so many sectarians have pretended to, cannot be such a rule of faith, because it has led to innumerable errors[b]. *Scripture* interpreted by private judgment has also led to errors and contradictions[c]. Therefore the Roman Catholic rule of faith, which rests faith on the authority of the living Church, propounding and explaining the word of God both written and unwritten, must be received. I am not now concerned with this argument, further than as it bears on Scripture.

Dr. Milner observes then, in reference to Scripture, that "if Christ had intended that all mankind should learn his religion from a *book*, namely, the *New Testament*, He himself would have written that book;" that "it does not appear that He gave his apostles any command to *write* the Gospel;" that there is nothing "in the Gospels themselves which indicates that any one of them, or all of them together, contain an entire, detailed, and *clear* exposition of the whole religion of Jesus Christ;" that the "method of determining religious questions by *Scripture* only, according to each individual's interpretation, has always produced, wherever and whenever it has been adopted, endless and incurable dissensions, and, of course, errors;" that "it has also caused mutual persecution and bloodshed; it has produced tumults, rebellions, and anarchy beyond recounting[d]."

As regards the inspiration, genuineness, and au-

[b] Milner, End of Controversy, lett. ii. iii.

[c] Lett. iv. v.

[d] Lett. iv.

thenticity of Scripture, we have the following arguments. A person who is not a member of the Roman Catholic Church cannot be certain that the Bible is the word of God. Because, first, "by what means have you learnt what is the Canon of Scripture, that is to say, which are the books that have been written by Divine inspiration? or, indeed, how have you ascertained that any books at all have been so written? You cannot discover any of these things by your rule, because the Scripture, as your great authority Hooker shows, and Chillingworth allows, cannot bear testimony to itself."

I omit several ingenious arguments in reference to the inspiration of Scripture, and proceed to the next position. "You have no sufficient authority for asserting that the sacred volumes are the *genuine compositions* of the holy personages whose names they bear, except the tradition and *living voice* of the Catholic Church." I pass over the reasons by which this assertion is supported, and come to another position. "Supposing the divine authority of the sacred books themselves to be established; how do you know that the copies of them translated and printed in your Bible are authentic? It is agreed upon amongst the learned, that together with the Temple and city of Jerusalem, the *original text* of Moses and the ancient prophets were destroyed by the Assyrians under Nebuchadnezzar; and though they were replaced by authentic copies ... through the care of the prophet Esdras, yet that these also perished in the subsequent persecution of Antiochus; from which time we have no evidence of the *authenticity* of the Old Testament, till this was supplied by Christ and his apostles, who transmitted it to the Church. In like manner granting,

for example, that St. Paul wrote an inspired epistle to the Romans, and another to the Ephesians; yet as the former was entrusted to an individual.... and the latter to his disciple Tychicus... it is impossible for you to entertain *a rational conviction* that these epistles, as they stand in your Testament, are exactly in the state in which they issued from the apostle's pen, or that they are *his genuine Epistles at all*, without recurring to the tradition and *authority* of the Catholic Church concerning them." This writer then refers to *various readings* of the sacred text as rendering it doubtful in itself; and to the uncertainties of *translations* from the original Hebrew and Greek.

In fine, he argues, that even supposing the Bible to be canonical, authentic, and genuine, still it is not a sufficient rule or method of conducting to true doctrine, unless we can be "equally certain of *understanding the whole of it* rightly." He observes, that the Gospel "consists not in the words, but in the sense;" that the devil himself could quote Scripture texts; that there are "numberless obscurities and difficulties in Scripture;" that it is full of sublime doctrines, mysterious prophecies, peculiar idioms, numerous and bold figures of speech; that it is difficult to reconcile certain sayings of the patriarchs "with the incommutable precept of truth;" that it is a mere "begging the question" to assume that Scripture is clear in all that is necessary to be known; that there are "hundreds of difficulties regarding our moral duties" in the Scriptures; that, in fine, if the *authority* of the Roman Catholic Church be not received, there can be no "certain assurance," no "absolute security," that particular interpretations

of Scripture are true, since "learned, intelligent, and sincere Christians have understood those passages in a different sense[e]."

Such are the grounds on which Romanists invariably contend, that the Bible alone is not, and cannot be, the rule of faith. The same arguments, with scarcely a difference, are to be found in all their controversial writings against Protestants, and in all their works in defence of the authority of the Church. The *inspiration*, the *authenticity*, the *genuineness*, the *interpretation* of Scripture are, according to them, beset by so many objections, difficulties, and doubts, that *certainty* on these points can only be attained by accepting the Bible on the *authority* of the Catholic Church, *i. e.* of the *existing* Roman Church. It is uniformly maintained, that faith in the Scriptures when founded on *human testimony* cannot be firm or certain, because human testimony is liable to error. This is the argument of Bossuet in his Conference with the Protestant Claude[f]: it is the argument of Dr. Milner, who says, "Protestants, in building Scripture as they do upon tradition, as a mere human testimony, not as *a rule of faith*, can only form an act of human faith, that is to say, *an opinion* of its being inspired[g]." Of course this objection applies equally to the authenticity and genuineness of Scripture as to its inspiration: all would be equally uncertain. The conclusion drawn from this is, that the existing Church being the only certain expositor of Scripture, and the only foundation on which its authority and obligation can be maintained, all refer-

[e] Milner, End of Controversy, lett. v.

[f] Bossuet, Confer. avec M. Claude, Minist. de Charenton, p. 147, &c.

[g] Milner, End of Cont. lett. xi.

ence to Scripture in opposition to that Church's doctrines or practices must be absurd.

It is impossible to deny that this conclusion follows legitimately from the premises. If the living Church be authorized to infuse her own interpretation on Scripture, it is, of course, our duty to submit at once to her doctrines. It is, in fact, the peculiar and distinguishing principle of Romish theology, that faith, on the whole, depends entirely on the authority of the living Roman Church. This cannot be more clearly stated than it has been by Dr. Wiseman: "I will explain," he says, "in the simplest manner possible, the *ground* whereupon we found the *very principle of faith*, on what *we build the doctrines which we profess;* I will examine, in other words, whether we are justified in admitting, *as the groundwork of all we believe*, an authority, *a living authority*, established by Christ in his Church, with his security against error[h]." In the same way Bossuet, in his Conference with Claude, maintained continually that a belief in the infallibility of the Church was the sole foundation of a firm and certain belief in Scripture as the word of God, and in all the articles of the faith[i].

4. Now it has been already observed, that many able writers of the Church of Rome have devoted themselves to establish the truth of Christianity against Paganism, Philosophy, and Judaism. Without entering on any very extended survey of the proofs on which these writers have rested the defence of revelation, it may be sufficient to refer to the works of a Jesuit of the present day, of the highest reputation, for an outline of the system which Roman Catholics

[h] Wiseman, Lectures on the Catholic Church, vol. i. p. 3.

[i] Bossuet, Confer. avec M. Claude, pp. 139, 143, 145, &c.

in general adopt in their controversies with unbelievers.

Perrone, in his treatise "De Vera Religione," commences by a refutation of the *objections* which infidelity has raised to the *possibility* of a Revelation comprising mysterious doctrines. From the absurdities and errors into which man had fallen before the birth of Christ, even when guided by philosophy; and from the absence of authority in all merely speculative systems of ethics, the *necessity* of a Divine Revelation is argued. We have next a series of elaborate replies to *objections* against the possibility of miracles and prophecy. And here, at length, we arrive at the actual *proofs* of Christianity. The first is, "that Christ by his *miracles* and *prophecies*, and especially by his *resurrection from the dead*, proved his Divine mission[j]." The author makes the following position a preliminary to his argument. "It is, to us, firm and *certain*, that Moses, the Prophets, and Christ *existed*, and that the books of the two Testaments are *genuine* and *authentic*[k]." From this postulate, he proceeds to refer to the Gospels in proof of the *miracles* of Jesus Christ; after which he shows, in the same manner, that Christ *prophesied* the diffusion of the Gospel in all nations, the perpetuity of the Church subject to the successors of Peter, the fall of Jerusalem, and other events. The resurrection of our Lord is established, in the same way, from the New Testament at large. To these proofs are added the confessions of the Jews and Gentiles, who did not deny the fact that miracles had been performed, but attributed them to magic[l].

[j] Perrone, Prælect. Theologicæ, tom. i. p. 101.

[k] Ib. p. 100.

[l] P. 100—107.

Another proof of the truth of Christianity is derived from the excellence and sanctity of the *doctrine* of the Gospel[m]. And the author proceeds, at some length, to expatiate on the doctrinal and ethical precepts of our Lord in the Gospel, referring throughout to holy Scripture[n]. To these proofs are added presumptions in favour of the truth of the Gospel, from its propagation and preservation, and from the martyrdoms of Christians.

In maintaining, against Jews, rationalists, and unbelievers generally, that Jesus is the Messiah, Perrone deduces his arguments from the law and the prophets[o], referring to the prophecies of Jacob, Daniel, Haggai, Malachi, &c.; and clearing their interpretation, by the ordinary methods of criticism, against the objections of unbelievers.

It will be perceived, from what has been now said, that Roman Catholic apologists for Christianity have recourse to the same great proofs of its divine origin as we have seen employed by the ancient apologists. They very rightly appeal to the books of the Old and New Testament, as authentic records of the facts and doctrines of the Jewish and Christian dispensations. The arguments from prophecies and miracles, and from the excellence of the Christian doctrine, presuppose, of course, the genuineness and authenticity of the sacred books, and the uncorrupted preservation of their text[p].

[m] P. 129.

[n] P. 129—137.

[o] Prælect. Theol. tom. iv. p. 4.

[p] For similar arguments of Roman Catholic writers, see Huet, Demonstratio Evangelica; Fraysinnous, Défense du Christianisme; Bergier, Traité de la Vraie Religion; Bossuet, Hist. Univers. part ii.; Hooke, Relig. Nat. et Revel. Principia; Bouvier, Tract. de Vera Religione.

5. This is all very satisfactory so far: but we have now to examine the validity of this whole system of argument in the hands of a Romanist. Let him attempt to prove the truth of Christianity in this way to any rationalist or infidel; and the latter must be ignorant and unintelligent indeed, if he is not able to reply as follows:—"You would fain persuade me that Christianity is a Divine revelation, because its founders wrought miracles, and predicted future events, and taught a doctrine which far exceeded in purity and excellence that of any other religion that ever existed: and you establish these allegations on the statements of Scripture. But your ablest theologians have proved that the authenticity and genuineness of Scripture, and the preservation of its text, and its true meaning, are uncertain in themselves! To establish the truth of these miracles and prophecies, you must first establish the authenticity, the text, and the *true meaning* of Scripture, which you have yourselves proved to be questionable. To establish the excellence of Christianity as a revelation, you must prove that it actually comes from Christ; that the Scriptures are a record which may be entirely depended on; that they are intelligible, and that they have not been interpolated." The Romanist is perfectly willing to furnish this proof—this *satisfactory* and *infallible* proof—which is to exclude all doubt, and which enables *him* only to rest his faith on an immoveable basis! The *authority of the living Church* is the proof which he triumphantly adduces; and, to establish that authority, he refers to the Scriptures as the authentic record of Christ's promises, commands, and institutions. He produces a number of *texts*, which, he

says, clearly prove the perpetuity, universality, infallibility, unity of the Church, and the primacy of the bishops of Rome. Such is the mode of proof invariably resorted to by Romish controversialists. It is needless to produce instances from Milner, and Wiseman, and Perrone[q], and other well-known writers.

But here again the infidel will make the same answer which he has already offered to the arguments from miracles and prophecy: "You have yourselves proved," he will say, "that Scripture cannot be rightly interpreted, or at least, that there can be no *certainty* of any Scripture interpretations, except by *the living authority of the Church.* You therefore cannot prove this authority from Scripture, since, according to your own doctrine, Scripture itself, as regards its interpretation at least, depends for proof on that authority. To say that the texts which establish the authority of the Church are the *only* texts in holy Scripture which do not need interpretation, is to 'beg the question.' How can you prove the truth of such an assertion? Is it not certain that those texts are as much disputed, and as much the subject of different interpretations, as those which refer to the Trinity, the Incarnation, or the Eucharist? If the texts referring to the Church are plain and clear, those relating to all other important doctrines may be so likewise; and thus there is no necessity for any infallible living judge in the Church; if those texts are

[q] See Milner, End of Controversy, letter x. 2. xi. 4. Wiseman, Lectures on the Catholic Church, lect. iii. vol. i. p. 63, &c. lect. iv. Perrone, Prælect. Theolog. De Vera Religione, pars ii.

obscure, and need an authoritative interpreter, they are insufficient to establish the authority of the Church, which you have yourselves proved to be the only certain proof of the right interpretation, genuineness, authenticity, and uncorrupted preservation of Scripture. There is, therefore, on your system, no valid proof either for the authority of the Church, or for any Christian doctrine, to be derived from Scripture."

Some Romanists, as Perrone, Wiseman, Cardinal De la Luzerne, and others, have endeavoured to avoid this difficulty by relying for proof of the authority of the Church on Scripture, considered as a merely human document sustained by human testimony[r]; and then employing the authority of the Church to determine its true interpretation, and to establish its inspiration. But this leaves the difficulty in undiminished force. The infidel may rejoin: "You have yourselves proved that human testimony can be no foundation of firm and certain faith. You have also shown that the meaning of Scripture is uncertain. Consequently you cannot establish the authority of the Church, which is, according to you, the only foundation of the Christian faith, either on human testimony, or on any passages of Scripture. To do so, would be at once to place your faith on the very basis, which, in the case of the Protestants, you have shown to be untenable."

This is, in truth, a difficulty from which Romanists never can escape, until they relinquish the whole

[r] Perrone, de Vera Relig. pars ii. prop. ii. Wiseman, lect. iii. i. 62. De la Luzerne, Dissert. sur les Eglises Cath. et Protest. ii. 263, 264. De la Hogue, Tract. de Eccl. p. 107. Montblanc, Archbp. of Tours. (Tracts of the Cath. Institute, Tract xxx. p. 15, 16.)

basis of their theological argument, and adopt that of their opponents. The issue of the controversy between us *may be safely made dependent on this single point.* It is *undeniable* that Romanists, in order to establish the truth of Christianity, are obliged to relinquish the fundamental principles and positions of their argument with the adherents of the Reformation. To speak of "consistency" as an attribute of Roman Catholic theology after this, is simply absurd.

6. It may be very easy, in defending the claims of the Church of Rome against Protestantism, to undermine the evidences of Scripture; and, doubtless, the Sophists, who have thus argued, have left the defence of *Christianity* out of the question altogether; but when Infidelity and Rationalism compare the arguments of Romanists in defence of Christianity, with their arguments in defence of the infallibility of the Church, they will, in an instant, detect and expose the self-contradiction of the whole system. They will be able to demonstrate its falsehood from its inconsistency. Romanism, holding the principles in which it opposes Protestantism, is, in the hands of Rationalism or Infidelity, weaker and more destitute of proof than Heathenism itself, because it is more self-destructive. The argument for Christianity coming from a Romanist is only calculated to afford matter of amusement and sport to the infidel. If the principles of Romanism are true, Christianity has absolutely and positively no rational proof whatever. Romanism entirely subverts, or renders unavailing, the proofs on which the ancient Christian writers, and the Scriptures themselves, rested the truth of the Gospel. It leaves Revelation without any evidences. And hence it is compelled in self-defence to denounce

all examination of the basis of its authority, as heresy and infidelity. It has no evidences for that authority, which can bear the test of *examination;* none which can for an instant stand against its own principles. Those principles have destroyed the only foundation on which its claims can be rationally *proved.* The natural and necessary result of this procedure shall be stated in the words of one who was himself a victim of this miserable system of argument. "Into the *authority* of that Church I very consistently resolved the *certainty* of my faith as a Christian, and of my scientific theology as a divine. Yet, as, in all fanciful theories, that is the weakest which should be the strongest point,—namely, the *first assumption* which forms the basis,—I did no sooner allow myself to examine the question of Church infallibility, with a determination not to be intimidated by consequences, than my whole Christianity vanished like a dream[s]." "I concluded that Christianity could not be true. This inference was not properly my own. The Church of Rome had most assiduously prepared me to draw it[t]." It is to this cause that we are chiefly to attribute the fearful prevalence of infidelity in Roman Catholic countries.

From what has been said it is clear, that Romanism is, by its own fundamental principles, unable to prove that Christianity is a divine revelation. It has no argumentative basis whatever; that is to say, it is in the logical position of the ancient and modern systems of heathenism. May we not, therefore, reasonably infer, that Romanism, which has deprived itself of the evidences of Christianity, is not the Christianity of the Gospel, or of the primitive Church?

[s] Life of J. Blanco White, i. 256. [t] Ibid. p. 111.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY AS RELATED TO RATIONALISM.

1. How the evidences of Christianity have fared under the influence of Rationalism is probably known, to a certain extent, by the reader; but there is, indeed, a species of inconsistency in the very notion of proofs of the truth of any *religious* system being adduced by rationalism. Religion, which implies *an obligation to submit to the will of a superior being*, is inconsistent with a merely philosophical system, which rejects, as its first principle, any authority but that of the reason of each individual, and which refuses to acknowledge any tenets as revealed by God, except those which commend themselves to this reason. Rationalism is defined by one of its most intelligent adherents, Dr. Bretschneider, as "that theological belief which does not admit any supernatural, immediate, and miraculous revelation from God to man, but asserts that there is only one universal revelation, which takes place through the contemplation of nature and man's own reason; that the sacred authors did not write under the immediate inspiration of the Spirit of God; that Christianity was not designed to teach any incomprehensible truths and

doctrines, but only to confirm the religious teaching of reason; and that man *neither can nor should accept any doctrine to be true which cannot be recognized and proved to him by reason*[a]."

Now, it is evident that any system of opinion or practice founded solely on reason, is destitute of *authority* or obligation in itself. It cannot in any degree bind that reason on which it is founded. It must follow the dictates of reason, and must change as reason wills. Accordingly all rationalists "recognize the necessity of inquiring, of correcting, and of ameliorating their belief *as often as any new views require it*[b]." Consequently the *positive* system of rationalism, whatever it may be, is not a religion; it is a philosophy. This has been very distinctly seen by a rationalistic writer of our own day. "Is Christianity properly called the Christian *religion*," says Blanco White; "is the Gospel a *religion?* ... In my opinion, Christ came to liberate mankind from *all religion*, that great source of the worst human evils;

Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!

All men devoted to *a religion* are slaves, servants, θρῆσκοι[c]." Shocking as such statements appear, they are put forward without intentional impiety by those who have been led to adopt the rationalistic principle. They are even perfectly sound, and true, and necessary, if reason be the *sole* judge of the truth of religious tenets.

On the principles of rationalism, then, religion has no force or obligation; it becomes a philosophy,

[a] Dewar, German Protestantism, p. 17.

[b] Schröckh, quoted by Rose, Protestantism in Germany, p. 24.

[c] Life of J. Blanco White, vol. ii. p. 38, 39.

dependent on the human reason, which is its creator; and this essentially philosophical character is further evident from the confession, that religious doctrines in general are so far *dependent* on science, that they must necessarily alter as science advances and becomes more perfect[d]; that rationalism is unsuited to the great mass of mankind; and that if piety and morality are to be preserved in the world at large, it must be by retaining the popular notions of supernaturalism, or positive and authoritative religion, to which rationalism is opposed[e]. Rationalism in Germany has been charged with great insincerity in assuming the exterior face of Christianity, and urging the apparent retention of forms, tenets, and language before the people[f], which it deems superstitious and absurd, and against which it argues before the learned and intelligent. But the distinction which is thus made between exoteric and esoteric doctrine is strictly parallel to that of the ancient philosophers of Greece and Rome, who shared in the public practice of superstitions, which they derided in private,

[d] "Omnino progressus in literis per tot sæcula facti, iique non a singulorum hominum ingenio vel arbitrio profecti, sed sensim Divina Providentia, concurrentibus cultiorum gentium studiis effecti, plerosque Protestantium ecclesiarum socios ad altiora quasi scientiæ atque culturæ fastigia adduxerunt, unde aliam fidei religiosæ formam ac speciem intuentur, quam majoribus nostris pro illius ætatis rationibus licuit . . non possent, in tanta cognitionis naturæ luce, et antiquitatis pariter atque omnis historiæ notitia, tam insigniter illustrata et amplificata cæcutire." Wegscheider, Inst. Theol. Præf. p. xi. xii. See also Prolegomena, cap. i. § 11, not. *a*.

[e] "Hæc revelationis opinio . . . . multis modis hominibus profuit . . . Longum enim ac difficile iter est per nostra ipsorum inventa, breve et efficax per aliorum exempla et præcepta . . . Homines longe plurimos religione quadam *auctoritatis*, scil. *positiva*, ad bene vivendum egere, potest concedi." Wegscheider, Inst. Theol. cap. i. § 8.

[f] Wegscheider, Inst. Theol. Præf. p. x. cap. iii. § 27.

or in their literary productions. The Stoic and the Platonist argued against much of the heathen idolatry, and yet felt that some positive religion was necessary to the public welfare, and, as such, took part in it[g]. The rationalist in the same way contends against the Christian religion, *i. e.* rejects its mysterious doctrines as absurd, denies its supernatural origin, and argues even against its historical documents; yet he carefully retains the forms and language of Christianity, which are in contradiction to his real tenets, lest the populace should become wholly irreligious.

The rationalist may very possibly imagine that he is acting with good faith and sincerity in this procedure; but it proves very distinctly that rationalism is essentially a mere philosophy, which, like the later Platonism, borrows some ideas from Christianity; and that it is entirely unsuited to supply the place of religion. The very fact that it is built wholly on abstract reasoning, is in itself sufficient to show that it is unsuitable to the great body of mankind, whose knowledge must always be empirical, and whose powers of reasoning are extremely limited. Rationalism, it is true, is so inconsistent as to imagine, that there is "a *universal* [natural] revelation, which takes place through the contemplation of nature and man's own reason[h];" while it holds the necessity of the idea of a supernatural revelation for the conviction of the *multitude;* so that a supernatural revelation seems essential for the mass of man-

[g] August. de Vera Religione, c. i. v. Leland, Advantage and Necessity of the Christian Revelation, chap. xi. xiv.—xvi. Warburton, Div. Leg. of Moses, bk. iii. sect. 2.

[h] Bretschneider, cited above, p. 36. Wegscheider also acknowledges a *universal* natural revelation, which leads man to religion. Inst. Theol. cap. i. § 12.

kind, while no such revelation is requisite for mankind in general! I shall not attempt to reconcile so singular a contradiction as this.

2. What has been said is sufficient to account for the circumstance, otherwise unintelligible, that while Rationalism professes to have arrived at the purest and most perfect conception of the idea of Christianity, it proceeds systematically and elaborately to demolish all the evidences and proofs of the Christian revelation. What Romanism renders doubtful, Rationalism openly and avowedly subverts. The miracles of our Lord and of the apostles are resolved into natural causes, or treated as fabulous. The prophecies are proved to have been unfulfilled, or are alleged to have been written after the events they mention. The authenticity, genuineness, and text of Scripture are rejected. The possibility of a supernatural or miraculous revelation is denied. Thus the whole external evidence of revelation is subverted; while reason, the sole test of truth, can discern in the *doctrines* of the Scriptures, the creeds, and Christian confessions, no signs of a Divine origin[1]. Rationalism has not in all cases been carried to such lengths as these: the differences of its adherents indeed afford a rather inconvenient illustration of the powers of *unassisted reason* as a guide to religious *truth*. The system is, in fact, compounded of discordant elements; for the doctrine of "Accommodation" and "Mythus" was devised by Semler with a view to reconcile a belief in the inspiration of Scripture with the most absolute freedom of the human intellect: it was entirely based on the doctrine of inspiration and

[1] See Rose, Protestantism in Germany; Dewar, German Protestantism; Amand Saintes, Histoire du Rationalisme.

of supernatural revelation[j]; and yet rationalism now denies the fact of *any* supernatural revelation; and, in so doing, shows the absurdity of its whole system of "Accommodation" and "Mythus."

3. The rationalist, then, places himself precisely on the same ground as the philosopher did before the advent of our Lord. He has no *proof* to offer of the truth and obligation of the Christian religion, or of any other. Religion is, indeed, according to him, a mere name; it is a statement of nothing which reason cannot ascertain without its aid. Consequently no man can, on his principles, be bound to profess any particular religion; and, with regard to the *positive* tenets which rationalism supposes to be included in what it styles Christianity, it may be sufficient to say, that the adherents of this philosophy have not yet arrived at any agreement on the very first article of religion on which all depends, namely, *the existence of God:* for while one section of these philosophers recognizes a personal Deity and providence; another adopts pantheism in its various forms, and relieves man from all further moral or intellectual responsibility by *identifying* him with the Supreme and Eternal Being[k]. It is obvious also,

[j] Saintes, Hist. du Rationalisme, p. 132—134. Dewar, German Protestantism, p. 107.

[k] See Dr. Mill, on the Pantheistic Theory, p. 22, 156. Tennemann, Man. Philos. § 387, 391. Cudworth, Intellect. Syst. c. iv. § 25. The absurdity and impiety of pantheism have never been better exposed than by Augustine: "Si mundi animus Deus est, eique animo mundus ut corpus est . . . si ita est, quis non videat quanta impietas et irreligiositas consequatur, ut quod calcaverit quisque, partem Dei calcet, et in omni animante occidendo, pars Dei trucidetur? Nolo omnia dicere quæ possunt occurrere cogitantibus, dici autem sine verecundia non possunt. Si autem sola animalia rationalia, sicut sunt homines, partes Dei esse contendunt; non video quidem, si totus mundus est

that a system of opinion which includes in its fundamental principles the notion of indefinite *change*, according to the growth of human science, is not really a religious but a philosophical system: its tenets cannot have any force or authority; they are mere speculations.

4. Socinianism or Unitarianism is only a species of rationalism which has not acquired sufficient courage or consistency to arrive at the conclusions to which its principle necessarily conducts. Unitarians, from the time of Socinus, have always maintained the absolute supremacy of reason in religion; a doctrine in which they had been anticipated by the Manichæans[l]; and on this principle they have rejected many of the received articles of faith, and have endeavoured to show by the aid of criticism, that the texts which support those articles have been mistranslated or interpolated[m]. This mode of argument, however, evidently supposes that Scripture is, *in itself*,

Deus, quomodo *bestias* ab ejus partibus separent? Sed obluctari quid opus est? De ipso rationali animante, id est homine, quid infelicius credi potest, quam Dei partem vapulare cum puer vapulat? Jam vero partes Dei fieri lascivas, iniquas, impias, atque omnino damnabiles, quis ferre possit, nisi qui prorsus insanit?" De Civitate Dei, lib. iv. c. 12, 13. Wisdom, "falsely so called," has perhaps never laid itself more open to ridicule than when it has degenerated into pantheism. Even the gross anthropomorphism of the Pagan world presents more worthy notions of the Deity; though it must be observed, that pantheism has frequently been combined with polytheistic notions, as in the Hindu systems. See Elphinstone's India, vol. i. p. 170; H. H. Wilson, Vishnu Purana, Præf. viii. lxx. 6. Mr. Newman is of opinion that Revelation alone is capable of refuting pantheism. Arians, p. 201, 202.

[l] Augustin. de Utilitate Credendi, Præf.

[m] Thus the Socinian Belsham observes, in reference to the texts of Scripture which prove our Lord's divinity: "The Unitarians pledge themselves to show that they are all either interpolated, corrupted, or misunderstood." Magee on Atonement, ii. 437.

free from error; or, in other words, virtually concedes the inspiration of Scripture; and accordingly the Unitarians generally are distinguished from rationalists by what the latter term their "*Bibliolatry*," *i. e.* by a certain degree of respect for the Scriptures. Professor Norton and Dr. Channing, who are leaders of the Unitarians, in their correspondence with Blanco White, maintained the necessity of believing in the historical accuracy of the Bible[n]; and the latter complains that Unitarians are generally under strong prejudices of the same kind[o]. But if the leading principle of Unitarianism, the *supremacy of reason*, be true; that is, if we can determine whether any doctrine in any alleged revelation be true or false, by its conformity with the dictates of reason; it is evident that Rationalists argue more justly than Socinians, when they infer that revelation is needless, and that it has never been given; for if man is endowed by nature with so perfect a reason, he cannot require any other instruction[p]. And, besides this, the very claim advanced on behalf of reason, to determine the truth of doctrines, not by investigation of their external evidence, but by inquiry into their internal reasonableness, is inconsistent with the

[n] Life of Blanco White, ii. 251, 303. iii. 25, 118.

[o] Life of Blanco White, vol. ii. p. 228. The first article of the Racovian Catechism professed belief in the inspiration of Scripture.

[p] The argument is thus stated by Wegscheider: "Quemadmodum omnia alia animantia iis viribus prædita sunt quibus naturæ suæ fines obtinere possint, ita sine dubio etiam homo non aliter comparatus est; et quum ratio sit suprema ejus vis, hæc quoque satis idonea erit, qua summos naturæ suæ fines obtineat, ea igitur, quæ ad officia tuenda et ad religionem colendam spectant, intelligat et observet, adeo ut summi numinis interventus quidem miraculosus, quo ad summos ipsius fines consequendos ducatur, haud necessarius videatur." Inst. Theol. cap. i. § 11.

notion of a revelation; because there can be no other use in a revelation than to furnish such evidence, and to obviate the necessity for such inquiry. The principle then of Socinianism cannot consistently stop short of the rejection of all revelation; and it is evident that its tendencies are now developing themselves in that direction[q].

Rationalism and Unitarianism therefore are in their principle equally subversive of the notion of a revelation, or of any religion which is supposed to be binding on men. Religion is, in both cases, left without obligation or authority; because it is made wholly dependent upon reason: it is changed into a mere philosophy.

It is true that these systems borrow their positive doctrines from Christianity; but as those doctrines are, in this instance, established only by reasoning, they have no greater claim on reception than any other tenets which may be advanced by philosophers who disclaim Christianity and every other religion. The Pantheist, the Atheist, the Materialist, the Pyrrhonist, stand on precisely the same religious ground in reality, and have equal claims with the mere Rationalist or the Unitarian who professes to be a Christian.

5. It has been already observed, that the essentially philosophical character of Rationalism, or its inconsistency with the notion of religion, is shown amongst other things, by its making religious belief dependent on human science, so that it is liable to continual change and variation with the progress of science. Hence arises the doctrine which is common to

[q] The recent publication of Blanco White's Life and Writings by a Unitarian, and the translation of German rationalistic works, are amongst these indications.

Rationalists and Unitarians, that the knowledge of religion is progressive, and that it is continually developing; which Wegscheider very justly regards as inconsistent with the idea of any revelation[r]. Strauss, Feuerbach, and other recent writers, have, in accordance with this theory, represented Christianity as only a stage in the development of the human mind, which is hastening to its close, and is about to be lost amidst the discoveries of modern philosophy[s]. On this theory it will be necessary to speak more at length hereafter, in connexion with Mr. Newman's recent publication.

[r] Wegscheider, Inst. Theol. § 27.

[s] Dewar, German Protestantism, p. 196—198.

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE EVIDENCES OF CHRISTIANITY AS RELATED TO MYSTICISM.

1. As Rationalism acknowledges reason as the only test of religious truth, and therefore rejects all evidences or proofs derived from matters of fact, which it designates as "empirical;" so Mysticism, which constitutes an inner sense, or conscience, or inspiration, the sole test and proof of truth, to the exclusion of rational examination, equally supersedes and denies the external evidences of Christianity.

It is needless here to trace the principle of mysticism from its origin in the later Platonic philosophy through its various developments to the present age. Its characteristic, from the days of Origen, who was amongst its earliest advocates in the Christian Church, was the rejection of reasoning and study as a mode of attaining to truth, and the assertion of an universal light emanating from the Deity; by which alone men were instructed in the knowledge of divine things[a]. This rule of faith was adopted, under various modifications, by the Anabaptists, the followers of Schwenck-

[a] Mosheim, cent. iii. part ii. ch. 3. Gieseler, i. 112. Stapfer, Theologia Polemica, tom. iv. cap. xv.

feld, David George, and other enthusiasts in the sixteenth century; by the Quakers, Muggletonians, and Quietists in the seventeenth century; and by the Methodists and German Pietists in the eighteenth. I am not here concerned to show the enthusiasm and the extravagant acts of fanaticism to which the doctrines of mysticism have led in various ages, but merely to trace its general bearing on the evidences of Christianity.

2. In this point of view it is of importance to trace its prevalence and effects in Germany, where it has been more fully developed than in any other country, and where it is brought into immediate relations with the proofs of Christianity. The philosophical systems of modern Germany seem to be all, more or less, connected with mysticism. Thus one philosophy rejected all external evidences, derived from reason and testimony, of the existence of God, of moral liberty, and of a future life, while it recognized as the sole and sufficient proof and basis of religion, a practical faith, founded on our moral nature—a kind of intuitive perception or knowledge. Another philosophy affirmed that the existence of God was incapable of reasonable proof, and depended entirely on feeling and instinct. A third contended that providence, or a moral order of things, had no existence separate from our moral nature, so that the very existence of God is inconceivable to man apart from this moral nature; while a fourth held that our knowledge of God and of religion was founded only on *intuition*[b]. The operation of this principle, and its connexion

[b] H. J. Rose, Prot. in Germany, p. 209—213. Saintes, 235, 236, 326. Tennemann, Man. of Philos. § 372—400.

with rationalism, are strikingly exemplified in the case of Semler, who may be considered as the founder of that philosophy. After wholly rejecting all external evidences of the canon of Scripture, he maintained that "the real proof of the divine origin of a book, is *an internal conviction* of the truth of its contents, which is properly *fides divina*, and which we are accustomed, in the not very clear language of the Bible, to call 'the testimony of the Holy Ghost in the soul of the reader.'" "In virtue of this principle he excluded, without mercy, from the Canon, Solomon's Song, the books of Ruth, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Chronicles; while he regarded as dubious those of Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Daniel." As regards the Pentateuch he adopted the conjecture of Father Simon, and held that it had been compiled from various fragments of uncertain date, and had been recomposed by Ezra. "As this rejection of a great proportion of the books which compose the Canon, did not arise from a *scientific examination of historical testimonies*, but merely from a personal repugnance which had its origin in ideas contrary to those of the Bible, it is not surprising that the same repugnance induced Semler to reject many things in the New Testament, which contradicted his preconceived opinions[c]."

3. Schleiermacher, De Wette, Twesten, and others amongst the least exceptionable of the modern writers of Germany, concur in founding religion on sentiment or feeling, to the exclusion of reason. "Schleiermacher," says M. Saintes, "assigned in too exclusive a manner, feeling, as the principal and ordinary seat

[c] Saintes, Hist. du Rationalisme, p. 130, 131.

of religion, and declared that it was the source of the spiritual life;" or, in other words, he placed Christianity "on conscience as its foundation, and its real object." With these views of Christianity as wholly dependent on the moral sense, Schleiermacher regards men of eminent sanctity, as the sources of religious knowledge; "he teaches that it belongs to the essence of religion to spring from individuals profoundly religious and prophetical." Hence De Wette affirms, that, in order to recognize in any religious manifestation a Divine revelation, we must be possessed and moved by the force and the attractiveness which reside in truth and religious beauty; we must feel ourselves spiritually raised above ourselves; and must recognize in this manifestation an infinitely superior power before which we involuntarily bend our knees in adoration. That Christianity is one of those religious manifestations, and consequently a Divine revelation, is, according to him, merely an article of the received faith, that is, an ideal judgment, which cannot rest on any *argumentative* foundation: for the Divine carries *its own proof* along with it[d].

There can be very little doubt, that these theories of mysticism were derived from the writings of the English Deists. Lord Herbert of Cherbury, assigned man's natural instinct as the source of his knowledge of religious truth. The deistical author of "Christianity not founded on argument" contended that revelation is only imparted *internally* to each individual. "This," says Bishop Law, "he terms 'inspiration,' and 'infused evidence,' 'feeling,' and 'internal sense,' and 'of a nature little differing from that of

[d] Saintes, p. 384.

intuition.' In short, it is what will despatch the whole business of religion at once, without either 'time' or 'teaching,' reading or 'reasoning,' the use of our understandings, or the evidence of our senses[e]."

4. Mysticism, whatever form it may assume, whether it resolve the proof of religion into "inspiration," the "illumination of the Spirit," "intuition," "feeling," "instinct," "conscience," or by whatever other appellation it designates an inward principle which is supposed to be the *sole* test of religious truth, is essentially subversive of Christianity, and in its results is identical with rationalism. For if man possesses some inward sense which is an infallible test of truth, it follows that religion needs no support from external evidences; that such evidences have probably not been given; that the miraculous events recorded in the Scriptures were superfluous, and therefore improbable; that all notion of a supernatural revelation supported by external proofs may be safely rejected.

An inward infallible guide must, of course, be supreme: hence Quakers hold that the Scriptures are subordinate to the internal Spirit; hence Mystic Rationalists deny the inspiration of Scripture, and do not hesitate to dispute its authenticity. So that, in fine, Mysticism, while it declaims against the absurdity and impiety of constituting reason the sole judge of religious truth, only instals in its place another principle which leads equally to the subversion of revelation.

5. It may indeed be questioned whether rationalism

[e] Law, Considerations on the Theory of Religion, p. 18.

is not in many cases only *verbally* distinguished, as regards its principles, from mysticism; for "reason" may be practically resolved into "conscience" or "feeling;" or it may be even theoretically combined with them. This has been actually done by a rationalist very recently. "Christianity," says Blanco White, "must carry its own proof in its reasonableness, in its agreement with the *light within us*, as the original Quakers very properly asserted, though with this clear view of the Gospel they mixed up the most absurd enthusiasm: if not, Christianity must be a gradually decreasing sect. This *light of the conscience* is what Christ and the original apostles called the *Spirit*, which was to lead the disciples into all *the truth*. The necessity of believing in *inspiration* and *miracles* was the contrivance of those early Christians who wished to become priests[f]." "What he [Barclay] and the primitive Quakers called the Spirit is nothing but *conscience*, or the *practical reason*....By this supreme judge within us the Scriptures must be tried, whether what they contain is of God. I do not mean that we could have invented, or discovered, or explained, so as to fit it for the mass of mankind, every thing which Christ taught: but whether we are to receive it or not, as worthy of God, must be decided by our *conscientious reason*....As to *historical facts*, whether natural or supernatural, they are matters of mere human criticism, and cannot have been made necessary to our eternal happiness. The *authenticity of the books themselves* is only a *probability*, and the difficulties attached to the proof are acknowledged by those

[f] Life of Blanco White, vol. ii. p. 230.

who have laboured most to prove it[g]." "The New Testament contains the purest spirit of Christianity, but that pure spirit must be drawn from it by means of the spirit within us. That spirit (the *conscientious reason*, which is God himself) must make the selection between what is human and what is divine in those books[h]." "It is a vain attempt to seek for knowledge of the Deity anywhere but *within ourselves*. ....Useless, or worse than useless, are all the arguments of *natural theology*, unless we have previously found the proof of the being of God in our own souls[i]."

In these passages we find a combination of mysticism and rationalism, or a passing of one into the other; and, as a necessary result, the rejection of all the external evidences of Christianity, and even of natural religion.

[g] Vol. ii. p. 235. [h] Vol. ii. p. 264. [i] Vol. iii. p. 147.

## CHAPTER V.

### THE EVIDENCES OF RELIGION SUBVERTED BY RECENT THEORIES OF CONSCIENCE.

1. THE professed object of the recent publications on "Development," and on "The Ideal of a Christian Church," appears to be, the acquisition of a clear and consistent mode of establishing the truth of Christian doctrines. The author of the former work has in several places expressed an opinion of the insufficiency of existing systems of argument on behalf of Christianity, and a feeling of the necessity of adopting a new theory which may harmonize apparent contradictions and solve difficulties. His disciple also evidently imagines a similar necessity. But in proceeding to apply their remedies, one, at least, of these writers has adopted rationalistic principles, and both have been led into mysticism.

The theory of conscience which these writers have propounded as the sole test of religious truth is purely mystic, and leads to the subversion of Christianity; it is also entirely contradictory to the opinions of those who have advanced it; and is in direct opposition to Scripture and to the common sense of Christians.

I shall first proceed to show that these writers

deny to man the right of examining the evidences of any religious system which may be presented to him; and secondly, that they recognize an *inward light*, which they entitle conscience, as the *sole* test of religious truth, to the exclusion of all external evidences.

While the believer repudiates the false theory of rationalism, which, in constituting reason the *sole* judge of religious truth, to the exclusion of all examination of the evidences of revelation, supersedes at once the very notion of a revelation, he will not be seduced by the equally dangerous theory of those who, in endeavouring to elude the sophistries of rationalism, or to promote some favourite view of religion which cannot be argumentatively sustained, deny to reason any part in the pursuit of religious truth, and denounce all examination into the evidences of religious doctrines as infidel in its tendency. To call for *proof* of any disputed doctrine is, according to such persons, absurd, unless we are prepared to submit *every* doctrine which we hold to examination, which would obviously lead to universal scepticism. So that, if any doctrine be presented for acceptance, it is, according to such reasoners, a duty to believe it at once, however absurd and unfounded it may appear; and scrupulously to abstain from any inquiry into the evidence of its truth.

2. This is undoubtedly a very large and comprehensive principle, and provides, at all events, for the augmentation of notions and impressions on religious subjects. How far it is likely to lead to a knowledge of the *truth*, or how far it is consistent with the notion of revelation at all, will presently appear. I am unwilling to misrepresent or exaggerate the

views of those to whom reference is here especially made. It is needless to call attention to the use of these principles by Roman Catholic controversialists generally, who have invariably contended that the tenets of the Romish Church ought to be received with implicit faith, and that any examination of her dogmas is based on a principle which necessarily leads to infidelity. It will be sufficient to produce evidence from the work of an advocate of Romanism, who since its publication has given proof of the sincerity of his convictions by entering that communion. "The Ideal of a Christian Church" comprises one of the most striking amongst the recent developments of the theory to which allusion is here made. In the concluding chapter of this work, the principle of "free inquiry" (under which appellation the author means to include all examination whatever) is treated at considerable length, and to that chapter reference will be principally made.

The writer in question has, throughout his researches on this subject, failed to discriminate between the case of those to whom religious doctrines are presented for the first time, and those who have been educated in their belief; and he argues from the evident unfitness of examination in a spirit of doubt in the one case, to its unfitness in the other. Hence commencing with objections to the process of "unbiassed and searching examination" into the truth of all our received opinions, which is urged by various parties[a], and on the unfitness of which, in a certain sense, there need be no difference; he proceeds to contend, that when any Roman Catholic doctrine is presented to us, it is most highly unrea-

[a] Ward's Ideal, p. 482, &c.

sonable and inconsistent to demand any proof of its truth.

"To those who call on the Roman Catholic to produce from Scripture or antiquity, definite and tangible grounds for his belief in the universality of St. Mary's intercession, I would say, Have you ever thought of producing definite and tangible grounds, from Scripture and antiquity, for *your own* articles of belief? That you have read both Scripture and antiquity, and seen much which coincides with your views, I do not deny; but you know very well, that if all the evidence bearing on a subject were produced in court ever so fully, yet if counsel were heard only on one side, there is not much doubt of the decision.... It is perfectly idle and absurd to imagine that you can really judge of the evidence, unless, by a sustained and prolonged effort of the imagination, you have supposed yourselves in the respective position of your opponents....Will you answer that not one man in a million is capable of the task I suppose? I think you have understated the matter; and should doubt if a man ever lived who was competent to perform it[b]." That is to say, if a Protestant, to whom some doctrine of Romanism is presented, requires proof of its truth before he accepts it, he is inconsistent in believing *any thing whatever*, unless he has previously submitted it to the most searching examination. This principle is, of course, capable of other applications. Accordingly Mr. Ward argues, that Protestants are inconsistent in demanding proof for doctrines presented to them by Romanists, while they do not examine the proofs which Socinians advance against their

[b] Ward's Ideal, p. 494, 495.

own received tenets[c]; that Socinians are equally so, in not investigating Schleiermacher's, Paulus's, or Strauss's view of Scripture[d]; that these latter rationalists are themselves inconsistent in criticizing the doctrines of revelation, while they assume the doctrines of theism[e]; that theism is itself unable to produce any rational proof[f]. The inference from the whole is, that "if faith" (*i. e.* an implicit reception of Roman Catholic doctrine *without investigation or proof*) "be admitted, the whole structure of Catholic doctrine rests on a basis which cannot be shaken; and if it be denied, we have no reason for believing so much, as that we were in existence one minute ago[g]."

3. This is all, doubtless, highly ingenious, and evinces, at least, the author's intimacy with the academic philosophy[h]; but so philosophical a writer cannot object to the general principle being elicited,

[c] Ideal, p. 496.
[d] P. 497.
[e] Ibid.
[f] P. 499.
[g] P. 508. Mr. Ward's mode of argument here is precisely that which he condemns as sinful in Roman Catholics. He remarks (p. 289), that their conduct in reference to Protestants is wholly indefensible in endeavouring, "whether in print or penned addresses, to shake their confidence in all the doctrines and principles which they most certainly hold," and in endeavouring "to make a 'tabula rasa'" of the minds of those whom they are anxious to convert, "if by some possible chance the image of Rome may be afterwards there inscribed." Ideal, p. 578. The deistical character of the Romish argument against Scripture has been already described in chapter ii.

[h] See Tertullian, de Anima, c. xvii.; August. de Civitate Dei, xix. 18. The sceptical character of this philosophy is exhibited by Warburton, Div. Leg. bk. iii. sect. iii. Mr. Ward's and Mr. Newman's theories of conscience and development, like the Roman doctrine of infallibility, are based on a philosophy which denies the validity of the ordinary proofs of Christian doctrine or of natural religion. The remark of Warburton on this subject is worthy of attention: "When once," he says, "we find an

which is involved in the whole series of his reasoning. Let us endeavour to "develop" this "latent" principle, and determine the value of the whole argument, by some applications which do not seem to have occurred to the writer who has employed it.

The principle, then, which results from the whole series of this writer's argument, is, that *when religious doctrine is presented for our acceptance, we are to accept it without examination of the proofs or evidence by which its truth may be sustained;* that it is in the highest degree *inconsistent* to act otherwise; and that examination of the proofs of any doctrine presented for our acceptance leads, if consistently followed out, to utter *scepticism.* Now, this principle extends to conclusions which the writer evidently did not contemplate. In the first place, he has no right whatever to apply this rule *exclusively*, to the acceptance of *Roman Catholic* doctrine: he has no right to determine, arbitrarily, that Roman Catholic or even Christian doctrines, when presented for acceptance, must be received without proof, or examination, while Protestant, or Heretical, or Polytheistic doctrines must not be so received. On what ground could such a distinction be legitimately made?

This writer will scarcely allege that the mere claims of the Church of Rome so carry their own evidence along with them, that any conscientious person, of whatever religion he may be, cannot fail to recognize

author, who would be valued for his logic, begin with depreciating reason, we may be assured he has some very unreasonable paradox to advance. So when the learned Huetius would pass upon his readers a number of slight chimerical conjectures for *demonstrations*, he introduces his work by cavilling at the certainty of the principles of geometry." Div. Legat. bk. iii. sect. iv.

their validity at once, and to adopt the doctrinal consequences which follow from that admission. He would be the first to disclaim such an assumption, which would be as uncharitable as illogical. But if so—if the doctrine of the Church of Rome, and the claims of the Church of Rome, do not at once necessarily carry their own evidence to every conscientious person; on what grounds can we be called on to receive *them*, in preference to the doctrines of any other religion, whether Christian or heathen, if *examination* of the evidence on which they respectively rest, be not allowable? If we were to receive without examination, or proof, whatever religious tenets might be presented to us, we should receive a good deal more than the writer himself would be anxious to see received, and religion would become a congeries of contradictions of Christianity and heathenism, of orthodoxy and heresy; or it would be in a perpetual process of change.

The writer in question would not relish this conclusion; and yet it is strictly deducible from his argument. But, to show the unsoundness of the theory, we will take a case. Suppose the doctrines of the English Church presented to a Romanist, or the doctrines of polytheism to a Christian; is he bound to receive them without demanding any *proof?* "No," Mr. Ward will answer; "he should either reject them without any examination at all, or subject them to the most rigid and searching scrutiny, before he even dreamt of receiving them." If so then, we are *not* bound to receive without examination of its proofs, every doctrine which may be presented to us, either by Romanists or by any other body of religionists; and the whole argument falls to the ground.

4. It does not seem necessary to enter further into the arguments in behalf of this theory; but the connexion of the theory with the evidences of religious truth is very remarkable: it is made to depend on the principle, that the articles of the Christian faith are destitute of any clear evidence derived from Scripture, or from the doctrine of the primitive Church; and that the proof of revelation itself will not stand the test of examination!

He instances, first, the doctrines of the real presence and of the Divinity of our Lord. In reference to the latter, he urges the "Arianism attributed by so many writers to several of the early fathers," and the *force* of the Socinian argument from Scripture[i]. As regards the proof of the truth of revelation in general, he cites Mr. Newman's assertion, that the historical evidence, at last, is only such, that "there are (so to say) three chances for revelation, and two against[j]." We have already seen (p. 56) that the writer is of opinion, that the doctrine of theism itself, *i. e.* the existence of God, is incapable of proof. It may be desirable to notice more particularly his sentiments on this subject. "What are the grounds on which we receive it [the doctrine of theism]? Now, I will allow for the moment far greater force than I believe justly due to the argument from *final causes*... When we consider the fearful amount of suffering, mental and bodily, which exists in every direction.. we cannot profess that, from the visible Creation alone, we should obtain a belief in the Creator's infinite love for man, and for his creatures... And in the last place, where in the natural world shall we see indi-

[i] Ideal, p. 487, 488. [j] Ib. p. 487.

cations of God's *personality?* Accordingly it is, I fancy, universally acknowledged by thinkers of the present day, that we must look to our *moral nature* for such a real and convincing proof as we are in search of... But then, a religious Catholic has the very same" proof of the doctrine of the Trinity, the Eucharistic presence, and the doctrines connected with the blessed Virgin[k]. Thus all external evidence of the existence of a personal God, and of religion in general, is rejected as insufficient.

Religious truth, in any case, may, according to this writer, be absolutely destitute of proof. "From the circumstance that some doctrine, wholly foreign to our own moral experience, appears to us to have literally no foundation in reason or in Scripture, not even the faintest probability arises that it may not be true[l]."...."And that for the simple reason, that religious truths *are their own evidence*[m]." Hence it is argued, that "religious persons will invariably present to the world the appearance of acting and of *believing* on absurdly *insufficient grounds*. To present this appearance is ever a characteristic note of the true Church[n].' So that Christianity is, according to this writer, a system which is unable to demonstrate its own reasonableness.

5. With reference to the authority of Scripture, he laments that "the Protestant world has agreed in taking as their first principle a *book* rather than a *doctrine*[o];" because, while Christian *doctrines* commend themselves at once to the conscience as true[p], the "Scripture narratives" are not so proved: "No ordi-

[k] Ideal, p. 499.
[l] P. 521.
[m] P. 523.
[n] P. 532.
[o] P. 534.
[p] P. 536.

nary Christian can say, (to make a purely imaginary hypothesis,) that if it became on other grounds *probable that some one or more of those were spurious*, he could have any spiritual knowledge of his own, which he could oppose confidently to such a supposition; nor yet again, that of those which *are* genuine there may be some few which, at first hearing, do not altogether commend themselves, and which he receives on the authority of the rest or of the proponent[q]." This distinction is worthy of attention: it leads to the inference that *Scripture* is not the word of God; because the conscience, which is acknowledged as the sole test of truth, is supposed to find *difficulties* in Scripture which it does not find in Christian doctrine. And the writer, therefore, delicately hints at the expediency of not resting on *Scripture* for the proof of Christian doctrine. It is rather singular, that, after having denied that even the *genuineness* of Scripture can be determined by our conscience, or inner sense, he decides that Scripture has *no other* evidence! The only evidence which he is prepared to admit of the Holy Scriptures is this: "The evidence to me of the Bible's authority is—*my* need, and its supply. It could be no matter of wonder, if God gave *no external evidence* for it whatever[r]."

Undoubtedly this inference is quite legitimate: if the evidence of the Scripture be wholly subjective; if it need nothing more in the way of proof than its recognition by the conscience of each individual, it is not to be supposed that external evidences have been given by God; and thus we may safely dispense

[q] P. 537. [r] P. 541.

with any belief in miracles and prophecy; but if, as Mr. Ward has previously admitted, the subjective evidence of the Bible does not in all cases establish its *genuineness*, it would seem, after all, that external evidences are not without their value.

Nor does this writer attempt to deny the *fact* of a supernatural revelation having been made, *i. e.* of a revelation evidenced by miracles and prophecy. He merely urges, that such external evidences ought not to be *examined;* that the *internal* evidence of Scripture, which arises from its adaptation to the wants of our individual natures, is *the only evidence of its truth to us.* But it is competent to the rationalist to infer from this doctrine, that no supernatural evidences of religion *have been* in fact given; because there is no assignable reason why they should in this case have been given. Rationalism on these principles acts very reasonably in rejecting all the external evidences of revelation. It meets the writer's recommendation also in refraining from real *examination* of any evidence alleged for revelation. It decides without *any inquiry* into facts, but simply on its inward sense of what is true or false, that supernatural evidences are not to be admitted; and on this inward sense it proceeds in various modes to deny or explain them away. The inspiration of Scripture, of course, and its authenticity too, vanish in this process. The Scripture records supernatural facts: the rationalist feels their impossibility, and therefore denies the inspiration and authenticity of Scripture.

These results might have been anticipated from a rejection of the mode of proof which has been traced by the hand of God Himself in Holy Scripture. We have

seen that Romanism, in its efforts to make the proof of religion wholly dependent on the infallibility of the living Church, has left Christianity without any rational proof, and reduced it to a level with heathenism and philosophy. We have seen that rationalism and mysticism have been led to the rejection of all positive religion, or the conversion of religion into a mere theory or a sentiment, by the assumption that reason or sentiment is the only test of truth. In rejecting all exercise of the reasoning powers—in denying the right of examination into the evidences of religion—the writer under consideration is necessarily led to undervalue all external evidences of truth, and to regard them as insufficient. Hence he has no scruple in assailing or undermining the proofs of Catholic doctrine founded on Scripture, tradition, and reason—the evidence of the authenticity of Scripture—and even of the first principles of natural religion.

6. This writer professes to have derived all his views from Mr. Newman, and undoubtedly the latter does, in some parts of his writings, afford some countenance to the assertion. The following passage is cited in evidence: "The apostles then proceeded thus....they did not rest their cause on *argument;* they did not appeal to eloquence, wisdom, or reputation; nay, nor did they *make miracles necessary to the enforcement of their claims*[s]." This passage is rather obscure, and may bear different meanings; but the doctrine advanced elsewhere is less equivocal. It is there taught, that the kingdom of God, *i. e.* Christianity when first preached, did not subdue men

[s] Newman on Justification, cited by Ward, Ideal, p. 556.

by appeals to their senses, *i. e.* by miracles, &c., but touched their secret hearts, from which an immediate response was elicited. And such, according to the writer, has ever since been the mode in which the truth has evidenced itself—more by its attestation by our conscience, than by its external notes and tokens[t]. There is some degree of vagueness in the language employed, but, on the whole, it seems to point very distinctly to the same doctrine which Mr. Ward has maintained, viz. that the evidence of religious truth lies in its harmony with our inward feelings, not in any external proofs addressed to our reasoning faculties.

In his "Essay on Development" the same writer contends that it is a principle of Christianity to believe doctrines which may be proposed to us, without examination, and on slight grounds. This principle is applied specially indeed to the doctrines propounded by the Roman Church; but it is evidently impossible to restrain it to such an application. The positions then, which are taken, are as follows: that in practical questions (such as the choice of religion) our course ought to be guided by presumptions at first, and that evidence may *afterwards* be inquired into[u]; that, in consequence, we ought at once to receive the whole body of doctrine propounded, and then apply it to explain the contradictions and difficulties presented by the history of Christian doctrine in ancient times[v]; that it is the character of true faith, to begin by believing on slight grounds or mere guesses[w]; that the early Christians did not examine

[t] Newman, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 359.

[u] Newman, Essay on Development, p. 147.

[v] P. 148—150.

[w] P. 327.

the evidences or proofs of the truth of revelation before believing it; that the Fathers approved of this mode of proceeding[x]; that while they were not "opposed to inquiries into the intellectual basis of Christianity, they held that men were not obliged to wait for proof before believing[y]."

The doctrine, then, of Mr. Newman, is substantially the same as that of his disciple. It is simply this: that when religions and doctrines are propounded for our acceptance, we must not enter on any examination of their proofs, or of the evidences of their truth; but must believe them at once on some slight and insufficient grounds, which, to the world in general, must appear absurd and irrational, and which, in point of fact, *are so.*

7. There is, however, one very material difference between the theories of the two writers in question. The one does not admit that religious truth possesses any proofs which will stand the test of examination and inquiry[z]. The other admits that there are such proofs[a]: he only contends that we are bound to receive the religion which they support without examining them; that although they have been given, they ought to be treated as superfluous in the first instance, and only resorted to, at pleasure, *after* we have, without evidence or proof, received the dogmas they support.

8. This difference between Mr. Newman and his disciple, however striking in itself, is less remarkable, than the contradiction which they have respectively given to their own principles. We have seen the

[x] Essay, p. 329—332.
[y] P. 331.
[z] See above, p. 60, 61.
[a] Newman, Univ. Sermon, 174, 191, 192.

zeal and ingenuity with which these writers have laboured to show, that any examination of the proofs or evidences of doctrines propounded for our acceptance, is sceptical in its tendency, opposed to the principles of Christianity, and in every way objectionable and absurd.

In reply to these arguments we need only adduce the admissions of the writers who have advanced them. I shall first produce Mr. Ward's statements.

At the close of his argument against examination of the proofs of religious doctrines, he remarks, "It is very plain, then, that the principle of *private judgment*, of proportioning belief as far as possible to *evidence*,—cannot be accepted as a *full* account of the process which leads to moral and religious truth. That *it has a place*, and that *an important one*, I am far from denying; but it has not the chief place[b]." Examination, then, has an "important" place, and "evidence" *may* be examined before we receive doctrines proprosed to us, *i. e.* we are *not* bound to receive without proof, dogmas which may be put before us by Roman Catholics, or Mahomedans, or Buddhists. This is not the only instance in which the common sense of the author has triumphed over his theory. When he considers the case of the Gospel being preached to the heathen, he supposes (and very reasonably) that the mere preaching of the Gospel may of itself, by the intrinsic superiority of its doctrine, lead numbers of persons to believe[c]. But, he adds, "that *in addition*, and in subordination to such grounds of conviction ... other appeals of every kind would be repeatedly urged ... is of course

[b] Ward's Ideal, p. 508.

[c] P. 559.

undoubted . . . Thus *the gift of miracles* has been commonly granted by Christ, as an attendant on his Church's missions; and especially in dealing with an uncivilized people, will it be a most *efficacious instrument of success.* The *external notes of the Church* are often another and most constraining topic[d]." These "notes" are, according to the writer, a proper subject of examination[e]: they are to be such as to "accredit her at once to all serious and humble persons as God's appointed representative[f]."

9. All this is very reasonable in itself, but it effectually subverts the theory of the author, that the rational examination of proofs and evidences is absurd and inconsistent; and that we are to believe, without proof, whatever may be proposed to us. Let us now consider Mr. Newman's admissions.

"I observe, first," he says, "that *undeniable* though it be, that *reason* has a power of analysis and criticism in all opinion and conduct, and that nothing is true or right, but what may be justified, and, in a certain sense, *proved* by it, and undeniable in consequence, that unless the doctrines received by faith are *approvable by reason*, they have no claim to be regarded as true, it does not therefore follow that faith is actually grounded on reason in the believing mind itself[g]." This is very satisfactory; and so likewise is the following: "religious persons sometimes get perplexed . . . Under these circumstances the varied *proofs* of Christianity will be a stay, a refuge, an encouragement, a rallying-point for faith, a gracious economy . . . Nothing need be detracted from the use

[d] P. 559, 560.
[e] P. 9.
[f] P. 10.
[g] Newm. Univ. Serm. p. 174.

of the *evidences* on this score; much less can any sober mind run into the *wild notion* that actually *no proof at all* is implied in the maintenance, or may be exacted for the profession of Christianity[h]." The theory which we have been considering is here unintentionally characterized in terms which I should be unwilling to employ: that theory, it will be remembered, is, that *no proof* is to be required, when doctrines are proposed for belief.

Mr. Newman, in the sermons already referred to (p. 64), teaches, at the commencement, that Christianity has at all times made its way, not by external evidences, but by the response which the human heart makes to its doctrines; but he afterwards admits, that Christ has in all ages held forth certain "plain and general tokens" which are for "beginners[i];" certain external evidences which are "a sign to unbelievers[j];" that "we go by *external reasons* before we have, or so far as we have not, inward ones; and we rest upon our *logical proofs* only when we get perplexed with objections, or are in doubt, or otherwise troubled in mind[k]".

It is clear then, from the admissions of both these writers, that religious truth rests on *proofs and evidences* which commend themselves to our reasoning powers; and that such proofs are especially intended for the conviction of persons before whom the truth

[h] University Sermons, p. 191, 192.

[i] Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 359, 360. It has been justly observed by Möhler, that "had Christ not wrought miracles; had the labours of the Apostles not been accompanied with signs; had the Divine power to work such wonders not been transmitted to their disciples; never would the Gospel have overcome the heathenism of the Greek and Roman world." *Symbolik*, trans. by Robertson, vol. ii. p. 19.

[j] Newm. Serm. p. 371.

[k] P. 391, 392.

is placed for the first time; that, consequently, such persons may examine such evidences, and that they act rightly in so doing; and that, in fine, no one is required to *become* a believer in Christianity, or in any particular Church, or religious system, without inquiry into the evidences of its truth[1]. These are, as we have seen, the principles of Scripture, and of the ancient Fathers of the Church, which the authors under consideration have endeavoured to subvert, but which they are obliged in the end to admit.

We must now examine more particularly the test of religious truth which these writers have substituted in the place of rational inquiry.

10. The general character and tendencies of mysticism have been shown in Chapter IV. It is only necessary here to repeat, that its essence consists in the exclusion of reason as a means of arriving at religious truth, and in the assertion of some inward light, whether natural or supernatural, as the sole test and proof of true religion. This light, as we have seen, has been variously entitled, "intuition," "feeling," "instinct," "practical reason," our "moral nature," "faith," "the indwelling Spirit," "sentiment," "internal sense," "the light of conscience," "conscientious

[1] Möhler goes even beyond this, and holds that it is the positive duty of the theologian, and of "every well-instructed Christian," not merely to examine doctrines presented for the first time, but even to inquire into the grounds of his actual belief. "For what," he adds, "is less consistent with our own self-respect, than to neglect instituting *the most careful and accurate inquiry* into the grounds and foundations of our own religious belief? Every man, accordingly, owes it to himself, to acquire the clearest conception of the doctrinal peculiarities, the inward power and strength, or the inward weakness or untenableness, of the religious community whereof he acknowledges himself a member." Möhler, *Symbolik*, translated by Robertson, i. x.

reason," &c. We have seen that the supremacy of this inward principle, as the absolute judge of the truth of all religious doctrines, has been equally maintained by enthusiasts, sectarians, rationalists, and deists. It remains to trace this doctrine somewhat further in the writings of the Romanizing school.

"We are now, then, able to see with some distinctness," says one of these writers, "the fundamental maxims of the philosophy of faith. *Conscience*, viewed in the abstract, has no power of discovering more than the immutable principles of morality. But in proportion as it is pure and well-disciplined, it discriminates and appropriates moral and religious truth of whatever kind, and disposes the mind to listen to this external message rather than that; while each new truth thus brought before it from without, in proportion as it is deeply received and made the subject of religious action and contemplation, elicits a deep and hitherto unknown harmony *from within*, which is *the full warrant and sufficient evidence of that truth.* Viewed, then, in the concrete, as found in the devout believer, we may regard *conscience* and *faith* to be the one and the same faculty. Considered as submissively bending before external authority, and ever deriving more of doctrinal truth, we call it faith; considered as carefully obeying the precepts of which it has knowledge, and as laboriously realizing and assimilating the truths of which it has possession, we call it conscience. And thus we see in part the reasonableness of *unquestioning belief;* for, on the one hand, it is by this very act of firm belief, that we are able really to grasp a moral opinion, and derive from it the full treasure of truth with which

it is charged; while, on the other hand, our preservative against real error is, *not the balancing of evidence, but the witness of a good conscience*[m]."

The whole of Mr. Ward's "Ideal of a Christian Church" is built on this mystical theory. Thus he states that "moral discipline is the *only possible basis* on which Christian faith can be reared[n];" that "holy and self-denying men are the *real fountains* from which moral truth flows to the world;" that the Lutheran doctrine of justification ought to be detested, because it "formally denies the truth which is *the key of all moral and religious knowledge*.... namely, that moral discipline is the necessary foundation whereon *alone* Christian faith can be reared[o];" that the English Church is in a fearful state of corruption, because she does not provide an efficient moral discipline for her members; that in consequence her members are unsettled in their *faith*. The object steadily aimed at throughout, amidst much confusion of ideas and innumerable contradictions, is, to establish the position that the *conscience*, if it be exercised and cultivated by moral discipline, is the *sole* arbiter of religious truth; and that *all external evidence* is either worthless or absolutely subordinate to this inward voice. Hence this writer speaks with disapprobation of that doctrine of Roman theology which bases faith on "the *external evidences* of the Church's authority," such as *miracles*, &c.[p]

11. This principle of mysticism is widely diffused amongst all the disciples of this school, and is found in complete operation amongst persons whose religious

[m] Ward's Ideal, p. 512, 513.
[n] Ibid. p. vi.
[o] P. vii.
[p] P. 581, 582.

feelings and sincerity cannot be with any reason disputed. It is a generally received maxim amongst such persons, that conscience, or feeling, or instinct, to the exclusion of all rational examination of external evidences or proofs, is the sole mode of attaining to religious truth. Hence they avow on all occasions, that in adopting new religious views, or in separating from one religious communion and uniting themselves to another, they act without any intellectual examination of the system which they adopt, but on an *inward feeling* that it is calculated to *meet their wants*. Rational conviction is not even pretended: *irrational impulse* is the sole motive which is alleged. Hence, one of the principal disciples of this school, in a letter published on the occasion of his recent separation from the English Church, says, "So long as the Church of England impressed my own *conscience*, in spite of her many anomalies, as an adequate object of loyalty and affection, I not only clung to her, but gave myself up to her, without *examining* the question of her historical claims upon my acceptance. And so now, without knowing definitely how Rome makes out her pretensions from the history of past ages, (a most *interesting* question, nevertheless, and one which I am delighted to think is so soon to receive elucidation,) I bow myself before her, because she plainly corresponds with that type of the Catholic Church, which *is deeply and habitually impressed upon my whole moral and spiritual nature*[q]." Here we have a perfect exemplification of the principle of mysticism above alluded to.

[q] Mr. Oakeley's Letter, p. 18.

12. The leader of this school has distinctly taught the doctrine. His whole argument, in the series of sermons alluded to above (p. 65), implies that external evidences are to be rejected when they do not coincide with internal convictions founded on moral discipline and piety of life. These sermons were addressed to persons who had been tempted to unite themselves to the Romish community on the ground of its external evidences, or notes, or other proofs. Instead of fairly meeting this evidence, and rebutting it if untenable, Mr. Newman proceeded to maintain, that if, from *experience*, we have found that piety and sanctity are attainable in the English Church,—if we have been conscious of deriving spiritual benefits from its ordinances, and in connexion with them; then we have an *inward* evidence which fully authorizes us in rejecting any external evidences or reasons which may be brought on the other side. This argument, of course, may be generalized, so as to apply to all similar cases. It evidently applies equally to the case of persons of any religious views whatever, who may be called on to adopt different religious tenets on the ground of their external evidence. For instance, it may be applied to the case of dissenters called on to join the Church; or of Mahommedans and heathens invited to embrace Christianity. The writer admitted the analogy of the cases, and endeavoured to show that, in all such cases, moral discipline and the guidance of conscience furnish the sole method for attaining religious truth, to the exclusion of any examination of evidences appealing to the reason. I must make some extracts, in order to establish the correctness of these statements. Be it remem-

bered, then, that *the question under consideration* was this: "Is it a duty to embrace the tenets and communion of the Church of Rome?" In other words, "Are we ourselves, as members of the English Church, in *possession of the truth;* or have we *to receive it from the Church of Rome?*" Now, observe the mode in which this question was met. It was replied, that if we have an inward *consciousness* of spiritual life, we may safely reject all external evidence to the contrary; that is to say, we may assume that we possess the truth, notwithstanding any arguments which may be brought to prove us in error.

"How great a blessing is it, my brethren, at all times . . . that the tokens of Christ are not only without us, but more properly *within us!* I say, in this age especially, because it is an age in which the outward signs of Christ's presence have well-nigh deserted us. Christ, in mercy to all who seek him, has been accustomed in all ages, in anticipation of his true *inward witness*, to hold forth certain plain and general tokens of his presence, to show the world *where* He is to be found. These are for beginners; or for those who are not yet beginners, that they *may* begin, and may thus be led on, by such *experience* of his grace, to discern those higher and better notes of which He speaks in the text. Since, then, in this our age, He has in judgment obscured the visible and public notes of his kingdom among us, what a mercy is it to us, that He has not deprived us of such as are personal and private? . . . Who among us may not, if he will, *lead such a life* as to have these secret and truer tokens to rest his *faith on*, so as to be sure, and certain,

and convinced, that the Church which baptized us has still the presence of Christ[r]?"

If we have such inward signs, (*i. e.* if we live a holy life,) there can, according to this writer, be no need of examining external signs or proofs:—

"What are signs and tokens of any kind whatever, but the way *to* Christ? What need of *them*, should it so be, through his mercy, that we have found Him? Who asks his way when he has got to his destination? Why seek the shadow, if we already have the substance[s]?"

The same principle is thus enunciated afterwards:—

"Surely, as the only true religion is that which is seated within us, a matter not of words but of things, *so the only satisfactory test of religion is something within us.* If religion is a personal matter, *its reasons also should be personal.* Wherever it is present, in the world or in the heart, it produces an effect, *and that effect is its evidence* . . . With some little limitation and explanation it might be said, *that the very fact of a religion taking root within us is a proof, so far, that it is true. If it were not true, it would not take root.* Religious men have, *in their own religiousness, an evidence of the truth of their religion.* That religion is true which has power, and so far as it has power; *nothing but what is Divine can renew the heart*[t]."

13. There is an evident fallacy in the whole of the writer's reasoning on this subject. He admits at the commencement of his argument, that external evidences are necessary to *beginners;* that

[r] Newman, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 359, 361.

[s] Ibid. p. 361.

[t] P. 391.

they are necessary to induce men to believe the Gospel; but he adds, that *after* they have acquired faith, they are enabled to attain higher evidences; namely, *internal* evidences. But this supposes that the external evidences concur with the internal in establishing the truth of *the same* religious system. It may be very well in such a case to disregard the former in comparison of the latter; but when they *differ*, as in the case under consideration, in which internal evidences are supposed to incline us to one religious system, and external to another, it is impossible to infer the course which ought to be pursued from a case in which they agree. In fact, the real question was, whether those whom Mr. Newman addressed, were not themselves "beginners," *i.e.* were not the proper subjects of *external* evidences: his argument assumes throughout that they were *not* beginners,—that they had advanced from external to internal evidences.

14. But there is another serious objection which may be raised to this system; and which the writer thus endeavours to obviate.

"It may be urged that it is very dangerous to guide ourselves by our *feelings* in religious inquiries, and very unwarrantable to judge of creeds by their effects . . . I reply, that I have said nothing to sanction such a proceeding. I have said nothing to lead men to consult the fluctuations of their minds *in the passing hour*, for information concerning God's will . . We cannot be sure of the Divine origin of any suggestion which occurs to us for the *first* time . . . [God] generally grants the knowledge by careful *waiting* on him and examination, *not at once*[u]."

[u] Newman, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 404, 405.

So that, in fact, this system does not lead us to depend on our feelings in religious questions, (which is admitted to be objectionable,) *because* it does not advise us to act as the impulse of the "passing hour," but to act only on feelings and imaginations which have been of *some* duration: in other words, we should be culpable in yielding to such suggestions of our nature, when they *first* occur to us, but we are safe in yielding to them, when they have been repeated several times! Such an answer as this establishes the validity of the objection which it meets. It admits the truth of the principle on which that objection is founded, and leaves it in full and even augmented force.

15. There is another obvious objection to the system, which the writer undertakes to meet. It is referred to in the following passage:—

"It may perhaps be asked, whether there never was an instance when it was a person's duty to leave the communion in which he finds himself; and if so, whether what I have been saying about *private tokens of grace*, would not apply to his case as well as ours. If it serve to keep religious persons in the Church, *it will equally well serve to keep religious persons in dissent* . . . The merciful hand of God has before now dealt with man in those far-spreading communions, though heretical, which have so long existed in the East; yet it is a duty to leave them for the one true Church. And as little can we doubt that the secret influence of Christ operates at this day in the large dissenting bodies which exist here, and in another continent; and yet we think it right to invite their members to Catholic communion[v]." The same

[v] Newman, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 407, 408.

writer elsewhere admits, that *conscience* has sometimes *prevented* persons from entering the communion of the Church of Rome[w]. Again: "If there be persons born in dissent, and filially attached to their own communion, and '*fearing God, and working righteousness in it*,' in them, we may humbly trust, is fulfilled St. Peter's saying, that 'in every nation' such men are 'accepted with Him[x].'"

The author of the "Ideal" is full and explicit in his statements on this point. He admits that *saints* may be raised up by God in any religious communion[y]. He allows that "very great piety and seriousness of character have frequently been seen in evangelicals[z]" whose *doctrines* he considers to be "antichristian." He speaks of "the *high and admirable religious attainments* of great numbers of the Protestants[a]," whom, however, he thinks to be involved in schism and heresy. He holds "in hearty admiration and reverence" the "noble and most evangelical virtues of Andrews, or Ken, or Wilson, or Butler[b]." He believes Liguori to be a saint, and yet considers him *in error* on so important a subject as the analysis of faith[c]. In fine, he admits the doctrine of "invincible ignorance," which recognizes the combination of piety and conscientiousness with error in doctrine[d]. So that it is clear, on the whole, that those who follow the guidance of conscience alone are not necessarily led into religious truth. This writer cannot pretend that in such cases *conscience* has, in fact, led to religious truth.

[w] Newman, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 383, 384.
[x] P. 413.
[y] Ward's Ideal, p. 89.
[z] P. 205.
[a] P. 275.
[b] P. 428.
[c] P. 581.
[d] P. 57—60.

In short, it is not denied, that piety of life, and religion, and conscientiousness, have been found amongst dissenters, heretics, Jews, heathens, and Mahomedans. How is this formidable difficulty to be got over? Mr. Newman meets it thus. The only grounds for leaving a religious communion are, (1) the "clear indisputable command of God to leave it" manifested by miracles, or (2) "some plain *experience* that God does not acknowledge it." This experience is, I presume, the *internal* evidence of conscience above-mentioned. Thus then we arrive at the conclusion, that if a religious person, in any sect or heresy whatever, feels continuance in his actual opinions, or in the communion of which he is a member, to be consistent with his own religious life, he is entitled to reject all evidences which may be brought to prove him in error, short of absolute miracles! The writer in vain attempts to show that this rule does not apply to heathenism as well as to heresy and dissent. "The plain contrariety" of heathen religions "to the first laws of all true faith and morality, which is involved in many of their first principles," and their sins "against sincerity, purity, and mercy," are abundant indications, he says, that God does not go along with heathenism. But how are such things to be ascertained? By the *external evidence of facts*, which he himself *rejects* as a ground for leaving a religious profession. Suppose a religious heathen then to have no internal evidence that he ought to forsake his errors, and worship one God, he is, by the principles of this school, bound to *remain a heathen*, until God works miracles for his conversion! The same reasoning will, of course, apply equally to Mahomedanism and to Deism.

16. But the writer has another answer to the alleged inconsistency of teaching the duty of *remaining* in the tenets of any assignable religious communion, and yet urging the duty of *separating* from religious tenets and communions and joining the Church. It is this: the dissenters are not called on "to quit any thing, for in truth *they have nothing to quit;* they profess they have nothing to quit....It is seldom indeed that a member of a seceding body is zealous for that body; he is zealous for what he considers the Gospel, that is, at the utmost, for what he would call a doctrine—though that means, if we may so speak, *his own particular* doctrine, which is, properly speaking, no *doctrine* at all, in any accurate sense of the word, but an opinion, his own private opinion[e]."

Now, this answer may be very satisfactory when applied to the case of those sects whose religion is a mere *negation* of truth; but is this the case with sects and false religions generally? Certainly not. For instance, that there is *one* and only one nature in Christ; that there are *two* Persons in Christ; that there are more gods than one; that it is lawful to worship idols; that Mahomet was a prophet; that dominion is founded in grace; that justification involves the doctrine of assurance and final perseverance; that regeneration takes place after baptism; that the Gospel prescribes a parity of ministers, and the institution of lay-elders: such doctrines as these show sufficiently that false religions are not always merely *negative* in their principles; that positive errors may be held, and vigorously held, by unbelievers or sectaries. In asking them to forsake

[e] Newman, Sermons on Subjects of the Day, p. 411.

their tenets, therefore, we do ask them to *quit something.*

But the concluding argument in the above passage is still more singular. It is there contended, that it is lawful to invite an adherent of false religion to embrace the truth, since, if he is zealous for his errors, it is *only* because he *considers them to be in accordance with the Gospel;* so that they are merely "*his own particular doctrines,*" which, in point of fact, are no doctrines at all, but mere "opinions." Now, this is inconsistent with the supremacy of *conscience,* as the sole arbiter of religious truth: it is here supposed to be liable to lead us into error; so that either this defence is invalid, or else it subverts the principle it is meant to guard.

The objection then remains, that the principle of the supremacy of conscience, as the sole arbiter of religious truth, leads to the conclusion, that men ought to remain in false religions[f], and that it is an act of inconsistency to attempt to convert them to the truth.

17. But let us look a little closer at the theory of

[f] Mr. Ward, more consistent than his instructor, does not hesitate to apply what he calls the "*high sacredness of hereditary religion*" (Ideal, p. 44, 74) even to the case of heathenism; and he accordingly argues, that the heathen ought not to be led to distrust their own religion. "How different," he says, "was the course pursued by the Church towards the heathen! How easy a task would it not have been to show the absence of all evidence or argumentative consistency in the various forms which religion had assumed . . . Yet, so far from adopting such a course, Catholics of those days drew the heathen towards the Church . . not by first *overthrowing* their existing creed, but by seeking parts of it whereon the superstructure might be raised." p. 579. The inference which forces itself upon the mind in perusing this strange passage, is, that the writer cannot have read a single Apology of the early Christians, or any of their works against the Gentiles!

conscience as the *sole* arbiter of religious truth, and see whether we cannot recognize in it some old and familiar features veiled under a different garb. Do the advocates of this doctrine quite understand their own meaning when they speak of the supremacy of conscience as the rule of faith? Are they aware what ground they are treading on, and what principle they are really contending for? It is evident that they are not.

What is really meant by the assertion that the *conscience* is the sole and sufficient judge of religious truth? The meaning is, that some inward faculty of our nature exercises a judgment on dogmas presented to it, and accepts or rejects them, according to their agreement, or disagreement, with its own promptings.

Now, this is introducing the *right of private judgment!* the very process and principle against which Mr. Ward, and those who agree with him, so loudly declaim. That it is so, is clear from this; that Dissenters use indifferently the plea of "conscience," and of "private judgment," in rejecting the doctrines and ordinances of the Church. In fact, these doctrines are identical in their consequences. The principle of private judgment may lead men to embrace Romanism exactly as that of conscience may. On the other hand, they may both lead to the rejection of Romanism, or of Christianity itself. They concur in rejecting *authority*, in resisting external evidences, and in asserting the right and power of man to make choice of his religious views, according to the dictates of his own nature. They are, in short, identical in all their practical consequences; and, when taken as the *sole* rule of faith, they are equally subversive of all objective religion whatever.

In fine, it is a very curious and instructive fact, that writers aiming at the inculcation of Roman Catholic principles, have been so unsuccessful in their attempt, as to have made common cause (though most unconsciously) with the Dissenters! It was not exactly amongst the Anabaptists, the Family of Love, and the Puritans, that we should have expected to find the essential principles of Mr. Newman and his disciples; and yet there they are with scarcely a difference[g]. In both alike, "conscience" is the sole judge in religious questions. Almost to the present day, Dissenters have invariably excused themselves from submitting to the Church on this plea: it was the chief ground on which the ceremonies of the Church were rejected by the Puritans.

18. It may be well briefly to recapitulate what has been now established. It has been shown, then, that Mr. Newman and his disciples have inculcated the principles of mysticism, including the rejection of all external evidences and proofs as means of arriving at the knowledge of true religion. It has been shown that the whole theory is founded on a fallacy; that it leads to absurd consequences, which its author ineffectually endeavours to elude; that it is refuted by the admissions of its supporters; that it involves the very principle which is, of all others, most abhorred

[g] See "Cases written to recover Dissenters," for several treatises by our divines against the plea of "conscience" advanced by Dissenters. The latter obviously made this "inner light" the sole test of religious truth: they only differed nominally from the quakers and other mystics. The treatise in this collection, by Dr. Sharp, archbishop of York, entitled a "Discourse concerning Conscience," may be advantageously read along with the Rev. W. Sewell's recent admirable sermon, "The Plea of Conscience for seceding from the Catholic Church to the Roman Schism."

by them. Let us now revert to the tendencies and results of this theory.

Its principle involves the *denial of all appeal to external or miraculous evidences of religion*, and the substitution of an inward guidance of the Spirit or of the conscience. If this doctrine be correct, the Scripture at once ceases to be the medium of proof[h]: it is an *external* evidence: consequently, it is no element in the process of conviction. Accordingly the Quakers, with perfect consistency, deny the supreme authority of Scripture, which they hold to be *subordinate* to the dictates of the Spirit in their hearts. Tradition, again, or the testimony of the Universal Church, must be equally rejected as a medium of proof; for this also is an external evidence[i]. The authority of the Catholic Church, being an external proof[j], must be also set aside. Thus then we reach the conclusions which rationalism arrives at in a different way: the inspiration of Scripture becomes doubtful, the moment that Scripture ceases to be a foundation of faith. On the same principle of the worthlessness of external evidences, and the unlawfulness of intellectual examination, it may be inferred, that miracles have not been wrought; that no revelation surrounded by such external evidences has been made; that the apostles and our Lord were mere teachers who developed a higher and purer system of doctrine than had been previously received;

[h] It is remarkable, that throughout Mr. Ward's "Ideal" and Mr. Newman's "Essay on Development," Scripture is almost wholly neglected as a medium of proof.

[i] Mr. Ward in many places speaks contemptuously of appeals to tradition or the writings of the fathers. See especially p. 130.

[j] The authority of the Roman Catholic Church, or the resolution of faith into its authority, is summarily set aside by Mr. Ward, "Ideal," p. 575, 580, 581.

that philosophers in later times have been able to correct and improve and develope the system of thought promulgated by the founders of Christianity. In short, we are landed fairly in all the conclusions of rationalism.

Such is this new theory of conscience in its natural tendencies and results[k]. But there are various analogous theories, whether consciously or unconsciously held, which resolve the evidence of religious truth into something inward and peculiar to each individual. Instances are not unfrequent of persons who have been induced to adopt religious tenets, not from any examination of the evidence for their *truth*, but simply because those tenets were exhibited in some shape, or were connected with some adjuncts, which called forth a response from their feelings, their imagination, or their taste. Men have, before now, been led to adopt Romanism by its fancied connexion with poetry, or painting, or Gothic architecture; and if such men had lived while the mythologies of Greece or of Rome were living systems, they would, with equal reason, have forsaken Christianity for heathen religions, in which art had arrived at its highest conceivable excellence. The adoption of religious views merely because they are in some way

[k] The *Dublin Review* contains the following remarks on the theory of conscience as advocated above by Mr. Newman: "We have foregone controversy in this article, and therefore enter not upon his arguments, if they can bear that name; for they are in clear contradiction with his own principles,—putting individual 'experience' above the teaching of 'faith,' and making a certain inward sense (the seat of private judgment and of every religious delusion) a surer test of truth than the great evidences and notes of the Church. In his own words, 'may they utterly fail and come to nought, and be as though they had never been!'" *Dublin Review*, December, 1843, p. 557.

connected with what is gratifying to our senses, or our feelings, and without primary reference to the evidence for their truth, is a proceeding which seems indicative of a practical disbelief in the existence of any revealed truth, or of any religious truth whatever.

## CHAPTER VI.

### MR. NEWMAN'S THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT COMPARED WITH PREVIOUS THEORIES.

1. We have seen, in the preceding pages, that Rationalism and Mysticism concur in rejecting the external evidences for the truth of Christianity, and that, in recognizing a merely subjective evidence arising from the conformity of the idea of Christianity to the reason, feelings, or conscience, these systems have placed Christianity on the level of philosophy, divesting it of all *authority*, and rendering it a merely human invention. Sometimes these theories take the language of religion, and even of Scripture; at others they dispense with it; but under all circumstances they are subversive of revelation.

It is an essential result of such views that Christianity or religious truth is variable—that it is dependent on the movements of the human mind. Hence Rationalism, which recognizes the intellect as the sole arbiter of religion, teaches us that religion progresses or developes with the progress of the human mind; that, in proportion to the advances of science and civilization, corresponding improvements are to be expected in Christianity.

On the question whether, and how far, objective

religion is capable of development or progress, various and contradictory opinions have been held.

2. Some sectarians have denied the validity of deductions or inferences from Scripture, or the certainty of any interpretations of it. This principle lay at the root of the demands so often put forth by the Arians, Socinians, Anabaptists, Puritans, and others, to produce the *express words* of Scripture for Christian doctrines or Church discipline. Of course, this principle puts an end to all notion of development or progress; but it is also fatal to revelation itself, for it implies that Scripture has no certain meaning affixed to it by God; from whence it might be inferred that no revelation has been made. But, while the latitudinarianism and even infidelity of such a principle are manifest, together with its extreme inconsistency with the practice of all who have adopted it, still, like most other errors, it is the exaggeration and perversion of a truth: and this truth is one of the highest importance—that *Divine revelation is one and immutable.*

The great difference between human science and revelation is, that the former is capable of addition and correction, while the latter, as coming from God, is unalterable. It is not a theory or a science, but a "deposit:" it is to be received, not invented: it is the subject of faith, not of reasoning, although faith itself be founded on rational grounds. If the fact of a revelation be conceded, novelty becomes impiety, change is prohibited, stability and uniformity become of the essence of religion; which being removed, religion itself is gone. It is on this principle—the unity and immutability of revealed

truth—that all appeals to holy Scripture and to the tradition of the Christian community are grounded.

3. But there is another principle opposed to this, which has occasionally manifested itself from a very early period. Even in the second century, some of the Gnostic teachers pretended to be wiser than the apostles[a]; and the Montanists maintained that a revelation had been made, subsequently to the Christian revelation, which carried on the latter to greater perfection[b]. It remained, however, for later ages, under the guidance of philosophy, to set wholly aside the Divine character of the Christian revelation, by recognizing in it a progressive nature exactly resembling that of human science.

This is the doctrine of Rationalism and of modern Unitarianism, which, being alike essentially philosophical rather than religious systems, make religious truth variable and progressive.

The principles on which the doctrine of development is based by these reasoners are as follows[c]. They hold that the progress made in intellectual attainment, science, literature, and general knowledge, which has taken place under Divine Providence, leads by analogy to the inference, that it was the will of God to conduct men by the same gradual progress to the full knowledge of Divine truth. And they judge this view to be confirmed by a consideration of the circumstances under which Christianity was first taught, *i. e.* by persons imbued

[a] Tertullian, de Præscript. Hæret. c. xxii. Irenæus, Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 2.

[b] See Bishop Kaye on Tertullian, p. 24.

[c] See Wegscheider, Institutiones Theologicæ, § 11, 27.

with various prejudices and peculiarities of opinion; by its intended applicability to more cultivated nations than the Jews; by its own recognition of the rights of reason and examination; by its want of logical coherence and accuracy; and by its actual improvement as shown by ecclesiastical history[d]. From such arguments it is inferred, that the doctrines of Christianity are in a continual process of improvement and correction; the imperfections of former ages being removed by subsequent investigations, and the substance of Christianity being thus gradually freed from the accidental errors with which it was accompanied in its promulgation by Christ and his apostles, and which exhibit themselves in the Scriptures. Of course this theory issues in the complete denial of the fact of *any* miraculous revelation

[d] "In qua ejus indole commonstranda respici debent primum homines, quibus ab initio doctrina illa tradita est, rudiores multisque opinionum commentis imbuti, et consilium Jesu ipsius religionem suam omnibus omnium temporum hominibus . . . et iis, qui populo Judaico multo cultiores futuri essent, destinantis; *deinde* Jesu rationis usum commendantis dicta . . . et ejusdem actiones, quibus ipse significavit, superesse quædam in religionis doctrina ab se instituta, quæ tempore procedente ab aliis vel *supplenda* vel *emendanda* essent. Sic accurate observavit religionis Jud. cultum externum, ab apostolis demum sensim abrogatum . . . *Tum* respiciendum est religionis ab Jesu et ab apostolis traditæ ipsum argumentum, non omni numero absolutum; *præterea* historia doctrinæ ecclesiasticæ, temporis successu, id quod Judaicæ quoque religioni contigit, emendatæ; denique omnium artium et disciplinarum quæ ad humanitatem pertinent, commune vinculum atque cognatio, qua efficitur, ut lux quædam uni alterive allata etiam reliquas collustret. Quæ si cogitaveris, haud miraberis, jam inde a rei Christianæ primordiis apud Gnosticos, Montanistas, et Clementem Alex. notionem quandam doctrinæ religionis emendandæ reperiri, cum persuasione de revelatione supernaturali ac miraculosa quidem minime conciliandum." Wegscheider, § 27. See also Præf. p. ix.—xii.

whatever. Revelation becomes merely the process of the discovery of truth by human reason.

It is an essential consequence of such principles as these, that the most *recent* deductions of reason in reference to religious truth, as representing the most advanced state of intellectual progress, are of the *highest authority;* that all appeal to the ancient Christian writers, the customs of the early Church, nay, to Scripture itself, (except for the purpose of *confirming* and illustrating *existing* religious views,) is absurd, and unphilosophical in the highest degree.

4. An eminent writer, in describing the course taken by rationalism in Germany, speaks thus: "When religion is thus placed at the mercy of reason, it is manifest that the first step will be to treat religious matter like any other science within the province of reason. Questions will arise, not only as to the value or truth of particular doctrines, but as to the meaning and scope of the system itself. It may have come down to us clogged with many human additions, and distorted by many human views. It may, perhaps, *never have been rightly understood from the beginning*, and may be still an unknown country, *to reward the labours and the penetration of future discoverers.* The same method, which the natural philosopher pursues in arriving at the knowledge which he presumes he possesses of chemistry or geology, must be employed by the religious philosopher in arriving at Christian truth.... The theologian must *mine* for the long-hidden treasures of truth, and, like the naturalist, must *make new discoveries, and modify his belief accordingly*[e]." Hence Schröckh declares that the

[e] Rose, Protest. in Germany, p. xxvii. xxviii. 2d ed.

theologians of Germany recognize "the necessity of inquiring, of correcting, and of ameliorating their belief as often as any new views require it;" and the spirit of this declaration, says Mr. Rose, "runs through every work of the rationalizing German divines[f]."

In Germany this theory, which has been known under the various names of Progress, Perfectibility, and Development, appears to have been first advanced by Krug, professor in the university of Koenigsberg, whose principal theological work, "Letters on the perfectibility of religious ideas," became the basis of all the more recent systems of perfectibility in religion[g]. These views were advanced about the end of the last century. Ammon, a leading theologian amongst those rationalists who are, properly speaking, Socinians rather than absolute Deists, has on various occasions advocated similar views. His work on the development of Christianity supposes a continual progress towards perfection in Christian doctrine[h]. Bretschneider taught that the true character of revelation consists in the continual development of intelligence, according to reasonable laws which God himself has fixed; that there is a law of progress in Christianity; that there is a development and a purification in proportion to the progress of the human mind[i]. The theory of Daub on development is, that religion has come to us by a process of perfection, operated in the course of ages in the assemblies of the Church. The nature of this theory may be estimated in some degree from the

[f] Ibid. p. 24, 59.

[g] Saintes, Hist. du Rationalisme, p. 241.

[h] P. 253.

[i] P. 264, 265, 271.

fact, that its author assails the proofs which demonstrate the existence of God; and that he considers the terms Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to express merely different operations of the Deity[k].

5. Rationalism in this country has adopted the same course. Blanco White, speaking of the "*Church* notions which exclusively regulated European society for many ages," and which involved the principle of "*perpetuity*" in all respects, says: "The great step which society has to take at present is that of changing this all-pervading error; to learn to act upon the irrefragable principle, that every thing in man and his concerns is *progressive;* that nothing can be confined to the same forms for ever, unless we destroy at once the life within it[l]." "I lament .... that all sects proceed on the ground that their respective characteristics are a complete and perfect whole; thus banishing from the minds of their followers all ideas of future progress[m]." In reference to what he calls "the *notion* of that personal *revelation* which is supposed to be made to some privileged person, in order that it may remain as an *infallible*, and consequently unchangeable, rule for ever," he says: "This view is in direct contradiction with the fact, that mankind was by God intended for *progress*.... But here is the melancholy effect of all sacerdotal religions. At some one stage of their infancy a (supposed) *perfect revelation* of the infinite model is published.... Priests and enthusiasts stand in the way of gradual improvement...and persecute all those who encourage the development of the human mind[n]."

[k] P. 341, 403, 405.
[l] Blanco White, Life, ii. 155.
[m] Vol. ii. p. 311.
[n] Vol. iii. p. 77—79.

6. With these theories Unitarianism professes entire agreement. "I look confidently," says Dr. Channing, "to the ineradicable, ever-unfolding principles of human nature for the victory over all superstitions. Reason and conscience, the powers by which we discern the true and the right, are immortal as their Author. Oppressed for ages they yet live.... It makes me smile to hear immortality claimed for Catholicism, or Protestantism, or for any past interpretation of Christianity; as if the human soul had exhausted itself in its infant efforts, or as if the men of one or a few generations could bind the energy of human thought and affection for ever[o]." In another place he speaks in the following manner: "From the infinity of Christian truth, of which I have spoken, it follows that our view of it must be very *imperfect*, and ought to be *continually enlarged*. The wisest theologians are children, who have caught but faint glimpses of the religion; who have taken but their first lessons, and whose business it is 'to grow in the knowledge of Jesus Christ.' Need I say how hostile to this growth is a *fixed creed* beyond which we must never wander[p]?"

Another American writer of distinction has recently advocated the same views. Professor Bush, in his "Anastasis," argues at some length in support of the theory of development. "The human race itself," he observes, "is progressive, not merely in physical continuity, but in mental development[q]." The same

[o] Letter on Catholicism; Works, p. 219, ed. Glasgow, 1840.

[p] Letter on Creeds; Works, p. 226.

[q] "Anastasis, or the Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Body, &c." By George Bush, Prof. of Hebrew in the Univ. of New York, p. 13.

law, viz. of "gradual development," holds good in nature and in revelation; and there may be discoveries in revelation just as there are in physical science[r]. The fundamental facts in revelation, which lie *upon its very face*, may be admitted to have been always known[s]; but other points may be discovered progressively, and especially in the present age, in which the science of *Hermeneutics* has made such advances. "No narrow-minded *taboo*, in any part of the wide field of inquiry, will be brooked in this age of unshackled research; and it is utterly in vain to expect any exemption of the *sacred volume* from this searching and most inquisitorial scrutiny[t]."

On the principle of development thus advocated, the author asserts that the doctrine of "the resurrection of the body" is "not a doctrine of revelation;" and professes "to arraign and convict of errors the current creed of the Church for the space of eighteen centuries[u]." The view of the resurrection adopted is "substantially the same" with that taught in the writings of Swedenborg[v]. It denies (with Wegscheider and other rationalists) the fact of the resurrection of our Lord's body on the third day, and equally rejects the notion of the general resurrection and the judgment at the last day, resolving all the language of Scripture on these subjects into "accommodations" and figures. Our future condition is to depend, not on the *will* of God, but on the necessary results of our present moral condition; and it is suggested, that in this point of view "outward positive inflictions" (*i. e.* the existence of

[r] P. 14.
[s] P. 16.
[t] P. 21, 22.
[u] P. v.
[v] P. 76.

hell) is a question of no consequence, inasmuch as sin will bear along with it its own punishment.

The views of this writer on development appear to have been derived from the German theology, of which he is evidently a diligent student, and to which he refers on all occasions.

7. It may be here worth while to introduce some notice of the theory of progress or development, put forward by Bishop Law, in the former part of the eighteenth century. He observes, that though Divine institutions apparently differ from human arts and sciences in possessing "all that purity and perfection at their delivery, which they are designed to have, and rather lose in some respects than get, by length of time," still there is no material difference on the whole[w].

And he explains it thus: "We ought to distinguish . . . between the *delivery* of a doctrine and its general *reception* in the world, which we know is always according to the measure of the recipients only; and which must chiefly depend upon the state and qualifications of the age they live in; as also between the supernatural assistance and extraordinary impressions at its first publication, and the ordinary state in which it appears, and the usual progress it makes, so soon as ever these shall come to cease, and it is left to be continued by mere human means[x]."

Dr. Law then describes at length the progressive nature of God's dispensations from the beginning of the world, and the gradual revelation of truth; after which, he proceeds to show that the same law was

[w] Law, Theory of Religion, p. 42.

[x] P. 43. This is precisely Mr. Newman's view.

continued under Christianity itself; the full knowledge of the Gospel being only gradually communicated to the apostles themselves.

"The Christian institution," he continues, "may be said to have been but in its *childhood*, even under the apostles. We find it for some time mixed with Judaism and subject to carnal ordinances: the apostles of the circumcision seem not yet to have any distinct knowledge of the general freedom from the ceremonial law: St. Paul is forced to conceal his preaching to the Gentiles for several years... No sooner had Christianity got well rid of the yoke of the Jewish law, than it was *corrupted* with Jewish fables and traditions. The Gentile converts were some time in laying aside their old errors and superstitions, and afterwards introduced an impure mixture of their *philosophy;* this soon produced innumerable sects and monstrous heresies, which take up the greater part of the history of these times. Instead of attending to the plain popular sense of Scripture, they fly to fanciful allegories, raise multitudes of mysteries, and maintain continual oppositions of science, falsely so called[y]."

"And though the whole scheme of our redemption was completely delivered, and all its essential parts recorded, during the extraordinary assistance and inspection of the Holy Ghost; and, in some respects, the primitive Christians seem to have the advantage of others, as being better acquainted with the style in which it was wrote, and some apostolical traditions which gave light to it; yet it by no means follows, that the true genius, import, and extent of this reve-

[y] Law, Theory of Religion, p. 145—148.

lation must be as well understood by the generality of them, as it could be by any that came after them.. Many of less merit, and lower abilities, but living in a more enlightened age, might easily prove equal, if not superior to them, in what may be called the *theory* or *speculative* part of their religion[z]."

This writer accordingly considers the testimony of the early Christians, as "of very little weight" in questions of Christian doctrine, and refers to such writers as Le Clerc, Whitby, Daillé, Barbeyrac, Calamy, Bohmer[a], &c., with a view to show that the fathers are very unsound interpreters of the Bible. He also contends against "an established rule of interpreting Scripture, which is laid down by an approved writer [Bishop Lowth] in the following words: viz. 'That we should have an especial regard to the practice and usage of the first and purest ages of the Church, and those that were nearest the times of the apostles[b].'" "One would have hoped," says Law, that "this Catholic doctrine of *Church authority* in fixing the sense of Scripture should have vanished by this time, as it has been so thoroughly exposed in all its shapes, by a variety of truly Protestant writers, both of our own and other communions, about the beginning of the present century[c]." The same author afterwards says, that we are bound to review our religious "establishments," and, amidst the present light and *liberty* of thought, to attempt their *further reformation*[d]. Amongst reforms suggested are the rejection of the usual notions of the *inspiration* of holy Scripture[e], and of their traditional interpreta-

[z] P. 148, 149.
[a] P. 148—153.
[b] P. 149.
[c] P. 151.
[d] P. 230.
[e] P. 248.

tion[f]; and the author exemplifies his own views of improvement by asserting the unconsciousness of the soul in the intermediate state[g].

8. We may now proceed to examine the theory of development, as put forth by Mr. Newman in his "Essay on the Development of Christian doctrine."

I speak of this doctrine as a "Theory," because its author frequently, and in the most pointed terms, describes it as a "theory," or a "hypothesis." Christianity, he says, "may legitimately be made the subject-matter of *theories*." "Whether it be divine or human . . . whether a religion for all ages or for a particular state of society," are questions, which, according to him, "belong to the province of *opinion*[h]." The theory proposed is designed to solve the difficulties presented by the phenomena of Christianity[i], and to furnish a basis for argument with infidelity on behalf of the Gospel[j].

Mr. Newman rejects as insufficient, what he calls the various theories, hypotheses, or systems by which Christian writers of ancient and modern times have endeavoured to account for whatever variations we may find in the historical testimonies concerning Christianity, to separate authoritative doctrine from opinion, to reject what is faulty, and combine and form a theology[k]. The appeal to *Scripture* as the arbiter of religious truth is summarily set aside[l].

The appeal to *tradition* or the testimony of the ancient fathers, on the principle of Vincentius Lirinensis, is equally rejected, as an inadequate solution

[f] P. 252.
[g] P. 323, &c.
[h] Essay on Develop. p. 1.
[i] P. 4.
[j] P. 28, 30.
[k] P. 8.
[l] "We are told that God has spoken. Where? In a book? We have tried it, and it disappoints." p. 126.

of the phenomena of Christianity[m]. Mr. Newman has no difficulty in acknowledging the truth, to a considerable extent, of Chillingworth's famous *dictum:* "There are popes against popes, councils against councils, some fathers against others, the same fathers against themselves, a consent of fathers of one age against a consent of fathers of another age, the Church of one age against the Church of another age[n]." He is of opinion, and he takes considerable pains to prove, that the fathers before the Council of Nice did not apparently hold the doctrine of the Trinity, or agree in their statements on the subject of the Divinity of our Lord and of the Holy Ghost; that, in fact, it is doubtful whether any sufficient proof of the Trinity can be elicited from their writings[o], that the doctrines of original sin and the real presence have as little support from primitive antiquity, as purgatory or the papal supremacy[p]. He rejects that view of tradition which has been advocated by Roman Catholic divines, under the appellation of the *disciplina arcani*, which supposes certain doctrines of Christianity to have been *reserved*, or not generally taught to Christians, and which thus explains the imperfect notices of Christian doctrines in the early writers[q].

He remarks, that the hypothesis, that Christianity was corrupted from its very commencement by Orientalism, Polytheism, and Platonism, "has no claims on our attention till it is drawn out scientifically[r]."

[m] P. 7—9.
[n] P. 4.
[o] P. 11—17.
[p] P. 17—24.
[q] P. 25.
[r] P. 25. This hypothesis is, however, substantially advocated by the writer, at p. 38, as will be seen presently.

9. Under these circumstances the Essayist proposes the doctrine of development, as a solution of the difficulty which he finds in Christianity:—"the difficulty which lies in the way of using the testimony of our most natural informant concerning the doctrine and worship of Christianity, viz. the history of eighteen hundred years." This doctrine, he says, "has at all times, *perhaps*, been implicitly adopted by theologians[s]." No proofs, however, are deduced of this position; and De Maistre and Möhler, writers of the present day, are alone referred to as having taught it. Mr. Newman meets the objection which may be raised against the *novelty* of this theory, or "expedient" as he entitles it, by observing that it would be as unreasonable to object to it on this account, as it would have been to object to the theory of gravitation, when first proposed[t].

The theory itself is this: "that the *increase and expansion* of the Christian creed and ritual, and the *variations* which have attended the process, in the case of individual writers and churches, are the necessary attendants on *any philosophy or polity* which takes possession of the intellect and heart, and has had any wide or extended dominion; that, *from the nature of the human mind*, time is necessary for the *full comprehension and perfection* of great ideas; and that the highest and most wonderful truths, though communicated to the world *once for all* by inspired teachers, could not be comprehended all at once by

[s] P. 27.

[t] P. 28. From what has been said above, it is clear that the theory of development cannot be considered "novel," as it was virtually held by the Gnostics and Montanists, and has certainly been very generally received by the Unitarians and Rationalists.

the recipients; but, as received and transmitted by *minds not inspired* and *through media which were human*, have required only the longer time and deeper thought for their full elucidation. This may be called the *Theory of developments*[u]." It will be observed that this theory is capable of a wider application than to Christianity. It is applicable to religion in general; and it is so applied by Rationalism.

10. It is a characteristic of this doctrine of development to set aside the testimony of the Fathers and of the primitive Church on doctrinal points.

"*It is sometimes said that the stream is clearest near the spring.* Whatever use may be finally made of this image, it does not apply to the history of a philosophy or sect, which, on the contrary, is more equable, and purer, and stronger, when its bed has become deep, and broad, and full. It necessarily rises out of an existing state of things, and, for a time, savours of the soil. Its vital element needs disengaging from what is foreign and temporary[v], and is employed in efforts after *freedom*, more vigorous and hopeful as its years increase[w]. Its beginnings are no measure of its capabilities, nor of its scope. At first no one knows what it is, or what it is worth. It remains perhaps for a time quiescent: it tries its limbs, and proves the ground under it, and feels its way. From time to time it makes essays which fail, and are in consequence abandoned. It seems in suspense which way to go; it wavers,

[u] Essay on Development, p. 27. See the extracts above made from Bishop Law, p. 97, 98.

[v] This, when applied to Christianity, precisely meets the rationalistic view of the *corruption* of apostolic Christianity.

[w] The rationalistic element here is obvious. Christianity is supposed to be developed by the struggles of the human mind after *freedom*.

and at length strikes out in one definite direction. In time it enters upon strange territory; points of controversy alter their bearing; parties rise and fall about it; designs and hopes appear in new relations, and old principles re-appear under new forms; it changes with them in order to remain the same. In a higher world it is otherwise; but here below *to live is to change, and to be perfect is to have changed often*[x]."

Christianity, according to this view, was less perfect in the earlier than in the later ages, and the Catholic Fathers are to be regarded as beginners, —in a certain sense, "sciolists." They did not comprehend Christianity except very imperfectly, and they were, of course, inconsistent, full of contradictions, inaccurate statements, &c. To appeal to them in controversy, then, is evidently absurd. Mr. Ward, on the same principle, wholly sets aside the principle of appeal to the early Church[y].

[x] P. 38, 39. This assertion of continual *change* is strictly rationalistic. See also p. 58, 61, 96, for other passages of the same kind.

[y] How striking and how significant is the contrast between such doctrines and the views of one who perfectly understood rationalism, and was amongst its ablest opponents. "It would be absurd to suppose that the first and Divinely assisted teachers of Divine revelation would not have at least as full a view of it as the unassisted mind of man could enjoy; that is to say, at least as full a view as any future disciples could hope to attain. If, then, the doctrines of Christianity were clearly laid down at its commencement, and if we have any reason to suppose that they were afterwards sullied and polluted by human inventions, there would seem to be only one method of ascertaining the justice of our suspicions, and of attempting the restoration of the doctrines to their native and genuine form. If the stream has contracted impurities in its course, we must recur to the fountain-head for pure and unsullied water. We must recur, for truth and light, first to Scripture, and then, if difficulties and doubts occur as to its interpretation, to those Christian writers who lived at the outset of the Christian system." Hugh James Rose, Protest. in Germany, p. 33.

11. Another branch of this theory is, that where there is religious life, *i. e.* where the idea of Christianity exercises a powerful hold on the minds of men, parties or schools may be rash and extravagant in their speculations, as they possess an inherent vigour which is certain to bring them right in the end. *Creeds and articles and other safeguards may in such a case be dispensed with;* they are, in fact, only necessary where the principle of life is weakly. "The stronger and more living is an idea, that is, the more powerful hold it exercises on the minds of men, the more able is it to dispense with safeguards, and trust *to itself* against the danger of corruption. As strong frames exult in their agility, and healthy constitutions throw off ailments, so parties and schools that live *can afford to be rash, and will sometimes be betrayed into extravagances,* yet are brought right by their inherent vigour. On the other hand, unreal systems are commonly decent externally. *Forms, subscriptions, or articles of religion are indispensable when the principle of life is weakly.* Thus Presbyterianism has maintained its original theology in Scotland, where legal *subscriptions* are enforced, while it has run into Arianism or Unitarianism where that protection is away[z]." This, of course, follows from the principle that Christianity was imperfectly understood at first, and is only perfectly attained by the striving of the intellect for "freedom" in successive ages. It is in this case perfectly right to make ventures and experiments; and the existence of fixed creeds and formularies is an evil, as tending to check development.

It is needless to observe, that these views on creeds

[z] Essay on Development, p. 76.

are decidedly Unitarian and Rationalistic. The theological temerity recommended is also characteristic of the same systems. It strongly reminds us of Mr. Rose's description of the founder of rationalism in Germany: "Gifted by nature with a most powerful mind, with gigantic industry, and the most unquenchable appetite for literary research, those happy predispositions were unfortunately in great measure counteracted by the faults of his early education.... Nothing can be more striking than the way in which he occasionally combined the fruits of his various researches, except the carelessness with which these researches were made, and the sort of fated blindness with which he neglected or rejected the most material element of the whole he was attempting to form. He never hesitated, in short, to *desert sober and substantial truth* for *striking but partial views, subtle error, and ingenious theory.* To these qualities he added others, which are very frequent ingredients in such a character,—*an undoubting estimation for all his own speculations*, and *a rash boldness in bringing them into public view*[a]."

We are also reminded of a description formerly given by the Essayist, apparently from experience, of the progress of the human mind in its discovery of truth. "Reason," he says, "according to the simplest view of it, is the faculty of gaining knowledge without direct perception, or of ascertaining one thing by means of another.... One fact may suffice for a whole theory; one principle may create and sustain a system; one minute token is a clue to a discovery. The mind ranges to and fro, and spreads out, and

[a] Rose, Prot. p. 73.

advances forward with a quickness which has become a proverb, and a subtlety and versatility which baffles investigation.... Thus it makes progress not unlike a clamberer on a steep cliff, who, by quick eye, prompt hand, and firm foot, ascends *how he knows not himself, by personal endowments and practice, rather than by rule, leaving no track behind him, and unable to teach another*.... It is a way which they (geniuses) alone can take; and its justification lies in their success[b]." Such a mode of arriving at the knowledge of *religious* truth, is certainly quite consistent with the "rashness" and "extravagance" which, as we have seen, the author considers as signs of religious vitality and strength.

12. Another branch of this theory is, that the unity of the Church as regards faith is a unity of *principle*, rather than of doctrines. There has been a continual *change* in doctrine, according to Mr. Newman; therefore the continuity of Christianity can only be preserved by its continuity of *principle*. "If it be true, that the principles of the later Church are the same as those of the earlier, then, *whatever are the variations of belief between the two periods*, the earlier in reality agrees more than it differs with the later, for principles are responsible for doctrines[c]."

13. Another feature is, that we are not to endeavour to discover the truth by appealing to the Scriptures and the Fathers, as a test of the correctness of existing or novel tenets; but to take the present view as a key to unlock the mysteries of antiquity, to *assume* that the existing form of Christianity is the truth, and to form our judgments of the ancient

[b] Newman, Sermons before the University, p. 252, 253.

[c] Essay on Development, p. 366.

records of Christianity, and explain them under this conviction, regardless of any difficulties which may present themselves in the process. The writer argues for the propriety of "interpreting the *previous* steps of a development by the later," and of "viewing the beginning in the light of the *result*[d]." This is, according to him, the mode in which the *prophecies* are made use of by Christians[e]. Hence he observes, that "where a doctrine comes recommended to us by strong presumptions of its truth, we are bound to receive it unsuspiciously, and *use it as a key* to the evidences to which it appeals, or the facts which it professes to systematize, whatever may be our ultimate judgment about it[f]." He illustrates this by observing, that the orthodox estimate the theology of the Ante-Nicene Fathers by the doctrine of the Nicene Synod; that they regard it as a key to their meaning[g]. He contends, that it is not an assumption "to *interpret every passage of a primitive author which bears upon doctrine or ritual by the theology of a later age*[h]."

14. The theory of development, as hitherto described, seems to assume the *perfection* of revelation in itself: it supposes that the truths of revelation were "communicated to the world once for all by inspired teachers[i];" and that progress and imperfection arise only from the nature of the human mind. But, in the course of his work, the Essayist intro-

[d] P. 153.

[e] P. 149—153. The argument in this place, if correct, would go far to subvert the proof of the truth of Christianity derived from the prophecies, on which the advocates of Christianity, even in the Church of Rome, have always mainly relied.

[f] P. 157.

[g] P. 158.

[h] P. 183.

[i] Essay, p. 27.

duces a widely different view of the question. He contends, that revelation itself was *imperfect*;—"that great questions exist in the subject-matter of which Scripture treats, which Scripture does not solve[j]"—that there are "*necessary*" developments, "not provided by the revelation as originally given[k];" "*gaps*, if the word may be used, in the structure of the original creed of the Church[l]." Now, from this important principle it would seem to follow, that the progress and developments which have arisen, have not been caused by the depth and comprehensiveness of the original idea of Christianity, but by its defectiveness; so that the whole theory appears to be based on principles which it is not very easy to reconcile with each other. For it must certainly appear very strange,—if human reason be so imperfect as to have been unable even to *comprehend* the idea of Christianity for many ages,—if this "philosophy or polity" required a very long time and deep thought for its elucidation,—that human reason, thus tasked beyond its strength by the mere comprehension of what was actually revealed by God, should be able at the same time to supply the *defects* of revelation,—to fill up the "gaps" which God permitted to remain in the original creed. This does seem to present views of the capacity of the human mind, which are as contradictory as it is possible to imagine. If human reason can supply the defects of revelation, is it credible that it cannot comprehend revelation?

15. Let us now briefly compare this doctrine and its results with the rationalistic theory of development.

[j] Essay, p. 28. [k] P. 99. [l] P. 102.

The theories of development held by the rationalists and by Mr. Newman respectively, concur in assuming Christianity to be a fit subject for "theories:" they also agree in arguing from the case of human philosophies, sciences, and sects, to that of Christianity, inferring from such analogy, the probability, nay, the necessity of imperfect comprehension at first, and subsequent variation, change, progress, development, and enlightenment. They, accordingly, concur in holding that the most recent development of Christianity is the purest; that Christianity is in a continued state of change; that the future will be more enlightened than the present; that the past is to be considered as imperfectly enlightened; that the further back we pursue our researches, the less do we find of perfect Christian knowledge, and the more admixture of foreign ingredients and of errors; that if there be any identity in Christianity preserved throughout, it consists in identity of principle, not of doctrine; that we ought to interpret the Scriptures and the records of the Church in accordance with existing opinions, *assuming the truth of the latter*, on the principle that the latest views are the most sound; and in fine, that creeds and professions of faith are not fitted for a pure state of the Church.

The rationalists infer from these principles, that we are entitled to disregard the authoritative decisions of the Church in past ages, and the doctrines and traditions of the Fathers; nay, that the Apostles themselves and our blessed Lord were not exempt from errors and contradictions; and they, of course, consistently with these views, reject altogether the notion of a supernatural revelation. Mr. Newman assumes that such a revelation has been made; and

perceiving the dangerous consequences of the doctrine of development, as inferring continual change, which may issue in the total alteration of the deposit of religion conveyed by revelation, he proposes the theory of an infallible authority in the Church, to preside over this development, and guard against its abuse and corruption. But then this is grounded on his assumption of the *fact* of a supernatural revelation, which rationalists will argue against on his own principles. They will argue, that if Christianity admits, like other philosophical and religious systems, of indefinite progress, change, correction, and improvement, it is, like them, the result of the natural powers of the human intellect; that if the existing state of opinion is to be made the interpreter of the past, and if, without such a key, Scripture and tradition are involved in mystery and inconsistency, the supremacy of human reason, in its present most improved state, is virtually recognized; that this reason being the supreme judge, it is impossible that any revelation can have been given.

If Christianity was imperfectly comprehended by those who had been instructed by the Apostles, and if the force of the human intellect has only gradually brought the truth to light, it does not seem unreasonable to infer, as the rationalists have done, that the Apostles were themselves uninformed on many points of Christian doctrine. And when we read in Mr. Newman's pages of the "gaps" which exist in the holy Scriptures[m]; of their deficiency as a rule in many important points of doctrine and practice[n], and of their apparent contradiction to

[m] Essay on Development, p. 102. [n] P. 98.

orthodox doctrine[o]; we cannot but feel that Rationalism, which willingly accepts such assertions, and acknowledges them as its own, is only consistent in denying the inspiration of Scripture, and the fact of a revelation.

On what grounds Mr. Newman has proceeded in assuming the fact of a supernatural revelation, as he evidently does, it is not very easy to see. He holds, indeed, as well as Mr. Ward, that the very existence of God, *i. e.* of a real personal God, is not to be proved either from a consideration of natural phenomena, or from abstract reasoning; that it is only made known by revelation[p]; and consequently he is dependent on revelation for the very first principles of natural religion; but if the holy Scripture and the records of history are in themselves so contradictory, so incapable of furnishing a satisfactory reply, as he conceives them to be[q]; if, as he assumes, *very few* of the Scripture miracles can be maintained against the infidel[r]; then it really seems somewhat strange to

[o] Mr. Newman holds, that it is necessary to reject the *literal* interpretation of Scripture, and to adopt some mystical or recondite sense, in order to arrive at the truth. The literal interpretation is, according to him, invariably adopted by heretics. The inference is, of course, that Scripture, in its *plain and obvious meaning*, is favourable to heresy and falsehood—that truth can only be obtained by far-fetched interpretations! Rationalism can demand no stronger argument against the inspiration of Scripture. See Essay, p. 319, &c.

[p] Sermons before University, p. 23, 24, 186. Ward's Ideal, p. 499.

[q] Essay, p. 126. 12, &c.

[r] "One strong argument imparts cogency to collateral arguments which are in themselves weak. For instance, as to the miracles, whether of Scripture or the Church, the number of those which carry with them their own proof now, and are believed for their own sake, is small, and they furnish the grounds on which we receive the rest." Essay, p. 155.

prove from such unsatisfactory data, the facts which establish the supernatural character of Christianity.

Starting from the theory of development as laid down by Mr. Newman and Mr. Ward, any one so inclined would, without difficulty, develope this theory to the denial of revelation. More especially will they do so under the guidance of a writer who is contented to admit of any kind of reasoning in developing the doctrines of Christianity. The logical sequence, which characterizes developments, will, according to him, "include *any* progress of the mind from one judgment to another; as, for instance, by way of moral fitness, which may not admit of analysis into premiss and conclusion[5]:" it is, in short, a "logical sequence" unrestricted by the rules of logic.

[5] P. 397. See also p. 337, where developments are described as "the spontaneous gradual and *ethical* growth, not as intentional and arbitrary deductions, of existing opinions," instead of resting on "logical proofs." Thus, "logical sequence" means, in fact, "ethical sequence," or some sequence which is not founded in reason.

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT IDENTICAL WITH RATIONALISM.

1. Mr. Ward and Mr. Newman endeavour to establish a strong contrast between the theory of development as put forward by them, and the rationalistic theory. Here, however, it may be remarked, that such alleged contrasts are very far from evidencing any real contrariety in principle. The rationalistic theory may be a development of that which is now before us, though it differs apparently from it in some points. "Ideas," says the Essayist, "may remain, when the expression of them is indefinitely varied; and we cannot determine whether a professed development is truly such or not, without some further knowledge than the mere fact of this variation[a]." This remark should be borne in mind, while we read the passages in which these writers endeavour to clear their doctrine from the imputation of rationalism.

"Mr. Palmer indeed," says Mr. Ward, "compares this doctrine to rationalism[b]; nevertheless, it has been the principal object of this chapter to place these two philosophies in marked and pointed con-

[a] Essay on Develop. p. 60.

[b] The allusion in this place is to the "Narrative of Events, &c." p. 57—63.

trast. And in truth, the question, whether we should begin by *believing* and at once act; or whether we should begin by *inquiring* and *abstain* from moral action, does seem sufficiently vital and fundamental. In one point they agree, and only in one; in clashing with the principles of conservatism[c]."

How far it is true that these philosophies agree *only in one point*, the reader has already seen. But the writer has, it seems, endeavoured to place them "in marked and pointed contrast." I confess that after a vigilant perusal of the chapter alluded to, I am unable to find that any such contrast is attempted. It is true, that the object throughout the chapter is to show that we ought to believe without examination or proof, whatever may be proposed to us; and that if we examine the proofs of any such tenets, we ought in consistency to carry scepticism to such an extent, as to doubt our own past existence. But this has nothing whatever to do with the doctrine of *development;* it merely relates to the mode by which individuals attain to the truth. That truth when attained *may or may not be capable of development;* so that Mr. Ward has been engaged on an entirely different question, and has not even attempted to place his theory of development in contrast with the rationalistic theory of development. This writer therefore seems to be unable to produce any tangible objections to the position which I had advanced, that they are substantially the same.

2. Let us now come to Mr. Newman's observations on this subject. "The process of development," he says, "has sometimes been invidiously spoken of as

[c] Ward's Ideal, p. 553.

rationalism, and contrasted with faith. But though a particular doctrine or opinion which is subjected to development may happen to be rationalistic, and as is the original, such are its results; and though we may develope erroneously, that is, reason incorrectly, yet the developing itself as little deserves that imputation in any case, as an inquiry into an historical fact, which we do not thereby make, but ascertain ... Rationalism is *the preference of reason to faith;* but one does not see how it can be faith to adopt the premisses, and unbelief to accept the conclusion."

"For instance, let us take a definition which some years since was given of rationalism. To rationalize is 'to ask improperly how we are to *account for* certain things, to be unwilling to believe them, unless they can be accounted for, that is, referred to something else as a cause, to some existing system, as harmonizing with them, or taking them up into itself... Rationalism is characterized by two peculiarities, *its love of systematizing*, and *its basing its system upon personal experience*, or the evidence of sense.' If this be rationalism, it is totally distinct from development; to develope, is to receive conclusions from received truth; to rationalize, is to receive *nothing* but conclusions from received truths; to develope, is *positive*, to rationalize, is *negative;* the essence of development is to *extend* belief, of rationalism, to *contract* it[d]."

How far, even on this very imperfect view of rationalism, the theory of development may be included under "the love of systematizing;" and the theory of conscience, as the sole test of religious truth, may be

[d] Essay on Development, p. 82, 83.

regarded as a system, "based on personal experience," and therefore be respectively regarded as rationalistic, the reader must judge for himself; but it is clear that in the above passage the Essayist has not taken notice of the true grounds of the imputation of rationalism to the doctrine of development. It is not, then, merely because reason is employed in *developing* doctrines, whether correctly or incorrectly. No one could object to the use of reason in making inferences from revealed truths. The real ground of the objection to the theory of development, and which attributes to it a purely rationalistic character is, that Christianity is supposed by this theory to grow, expand, correct, change, and develope itself, like human sciences and philosophies. It is represented as a science, imperfectly understood at the beginning; becoming purified in the lapse of ages; attaining its perfection only slowly and by degrees. This is exactly what Rationalism affirms of Christianity, and it is on this basis that it argues, and unanswerably too, that there has been no supernatural revelation; because the idea of progress, change, and development by the human intellect, is irreconcileable with the idea of such a revelation.

It was on this ground that the theory of development was said to be rationalistic[e], and no answer has been offered by Mr. Newman to that statement.

How far the advocates of the theory of development have been able to reply to the charge of rationalism, which has been made against that theory, and which is here distinctly repeated, we have now sufficiently seen.

[e] "Narrative of Events, &c." p. 57—63.

3. But there is another plea which may be offered in its defence. It may be alleged first, that certain tests of true development have been propounded in the "Essay," which will effectually prevent the theory from leading to rationalistic conclusions; and secondly, that development is not supposed to be made by individuals, but by a developing authority, *i. e.* by the Catholic Church, and that this of course wholly excludes all probability of rationalism.

Let us then consider these points in order.

The Essayist is conscious that development, instead of conducting to increased knowledge, may lead to corruption; and he therefore lays down certain tests to discriminate between true and false developments; and, with the same view, he argues for the probability of some power inherent in the Church to preside over the process. Now, it may be readily conceded, that if some of these tests, and if the principle of the infallibility of the Roman Church, were held as *dogmas* which it is not allowable to *question or investigate*, they would preserve intact the remaining dogmas of the Roman Catholic communion. But when they are put forward as mere "hypotheses" and "*theories*," they are at once brought within the province of rational examination and criticism. The question is, then, will they, when examined, afford any firm or solid ground on which those who hold the theory of development will be able to make their ground good against the further inferences of rationalism, to which the theory of development naturally conducts? Let us briefly examine them.

4. The *first* test which is proposed to discriminate the development of a philosophical, political, or re-

ligious system from its corruption, is the preservation, under all its various developments, of "the *essential idea*" of that system[f]. There can be little difficulty in admitting, that if the *essential idea* of Christianity be preserved (*in the full sense of the term*) in its developments, there will be no corruption. But it is to be observed, that the essential idea of a system may be simple, or it may be compounded of various ideas. The Essayist expressly disclaims the notion of Blanco White, that Christianity is included in *one idea*, "the body profiteth nothing;" and he objects, with reason, to the arbitrary eclecticism which assigns the idea of Christianity to any one particular dogma[g]. The inference then is this: the *whole body of ideas* which constitute the essence of Christianity; or, in other words, all the articles of the Catholic faith, must be preserved immutably and consistently, and it is thus alone that we are secure from corruption. In this preservation we must include, of course, not only the preservation of the articles of the faith intact, but also *the rejection of all that is either in theory or practice inconsistent with them.*

In this point of view there can be, I suppose, no doubt of the validity of the test, *if it can be applied.* Preservation of the essential idea of Christianity, in this sense, certainly excludes *corruption*, whatever form of development it may assume. Those opponents of Romanism, who suppose the whole idea of Christianity to have been understood from the beginning, can have no difficulty in admitting such a test. But then it is not very easy to see how it is to be *ap-*

[f] Essay on Development, p. 64, &c. [g] Ibid. p. 66.

*plied*[h], inasmuch as it involves an examination of *all the doctrines of Christianity*. To prove that the essential idea of Christianity has been preserved under its developments, is to prove that all the articles of the Catholic faith have been preserved, and all contrary heresies rejected.

Rationalists also can have no difficulty in admitting this test *in their own sense*. They maintain that they have preserved the "essential idea" of Christianity—that idea being nothing more than *the existence of God*. This idea has certainly been preserved under various developments, whether of orthodoxy, heresy, or deism. They hold that the "essential idea" of Christianity has no necessary connexion with such questions as the genuineness or veracity of Scripture, or the fact of a supernatural revelation. These, and all the orthodox dogmas of Christianity, they regard as merely human developments, the error of which has been gradually disclosed by the progress and expansion of the human mind; and in this view they are confirmed by the theory of development advocated by Mr. Newman and his disciples, that the idea of Christianity was but *slowly comprehended* by its adherents. When this has been conceded, the difference between this school and the rationalists is merely one of degree: the former holds that the doctrine of the Divine nature was not

[h] It should be observed, indeed, that Mr. Newman's own argument virtually concedes the inapplicability of this test; for when he comes to apply it, instead of attempting to show directly that the idea *has been preserved*, he is at once unable to *say what the idea is;* and is accordingly compelled to argue, that certain *external characteristics* of the *Church* in the earlier ages, correspond to certain external characteristics of the Church now. See chapters iv. and v.

perfectly understood till the fourth or fifth century, perhaps not till the thirteenth; rationalism has an equal right to say, that it was not understood till the eighteenth.

Thus, then, this test, of the *preservation of the essential idea of Christianity*, is one which admits of a rationalistic interpretation as well as of an orthodox one. It is not less favourable to the principle that the essential idea of Christianity has been *at all times comprehended*, (and which is subversive of the theory of development,) than it is to the principle that the Church has for eighteen centuries been in error in believing Christianity to be a supernatural revelation. It certainly does not guard the theory of development from rationalistic inferences.

5. We now come to the *second* test, by which the Essayist endeavours to discriminate developments from corruptions. That test is, "*continuity of principles*[i];"—such principles being supposed to form an essential portion of the original idea of Christianity. It would seem that this test is, in fact, essentially identical with the preceding one; for "principles" certainly seem to form some portion of the "idea" of Christianity. The writer, however, chooses to distinguish them here from "doctrines;" and we will follow him in this distinction. Does this test, then, of "continuity of principles," discriminate the theory of development from rationalism? In the first place, be it remembered, that the basis of the theory is, that the idea of Christianity, as a whole, (including, of course, its *principles*[j],) was not under-

[i] Essay on Development, p. 66—73.

[j] This is indeed expressly conceded by Mr. Newman: "So far, however," he says, "may be granted to M. Guizot,

stood at first; that the stream was impure at its source, and only gradually became clear. On this theory it would be impossible to maintain consistently, that every principle of Christianity has been received throughout with equal clearness and precision. We must expect that all ideas, whether "principles" or "doctrines," will be only comprehended fully in the course of ages. Without any further discussion, then, let us go at once to the particular points which Mr. Newman has selected as applications of his test, and as proofs that the Roman Church preserves the same principles essentially as the primitive; and let us see how far this test will stand against rationalism.

The first application is to the continuance of the system of interpreting Scripture, not in a literal sense, but in a *mystical* and *allegorical* sense[k]. If this be a proof that the system in which it is found is not a corruption, but a true development, rationalism has the benefit of the argument to the fullest extent. Its method of interpreting Scripture is wholly mystical and allegorical. All the miracles are "mythical," all the facts of the Gospel are "mythical," embodying certain truths or lessons; the Gospel itself is one great "mythus;" the existence of Christ is a "mythus." Such are the most recent developments of rationalism, in the works of Strauss and Bruno Bauer, which are entirely in harmony with the theory of development.

The second application of this test is to what is called the "*the supremacy of faith*;" that is, the

that even *principles* were not so well understood and so carefully handled at first as they were afterwards." Essay, p. 349.

[k] Essay, p. 319, &c.

principle of believing religious dogmas without any reasonable evidence of their truth, but on "presumptions and guesses[l]." This doctrine is, as we have seen[m], in perfect harmony with the mystico-rationalistic systems of Germany. Belief is by them founded on no objective proofs or evidences; for *they deny that there are any such*, *i.e.* that the existence of God, the supernatural character of the Christian revelation, the inspiration of Scripture, &c., *can be proved*. They accept only a subjective evidence of the existence of a Deity, in some sense of the term, (*i.e.* in a pantheistic sense,) as a postulate of their inward consciousness, or of their feelings; and, doubtless, in so doing they *do* believe without any very reasonable foundation. They wholly reject the notion of looking to reason for proofs of the existence of God; and thus their principle is identical with that which Mr. Newman here and elsewhere endeavours to establish.

It is evident, therefore, that this test affords no protection against rationalism. I do not examine its bearing on dissent, latitudinarianism, and heresy; though it might be easily shown that it is in various ways adapted to their views.

6. The *third* test is, "the power of assimilation[n]," *i.e.* the power of "taking into its own substance external materials;" and the application of this test is, that Christianity derived many of its notions and practices from heathenism and heresy[o]. This is precisely the principle which Rationalism contends for: it teaches that Christianity, from the beginning, included elements derived from Judaism, Gnosticism,

[l] Essay, p. 327.
[m] See above, chapters iii. iv. v.
[n] Essay, p. 73.
[o] Essay, chap. vi. sect. ii.

Heathenism, Anthropomorphism, Platonism, &c. And this view is rendered probable by the position maintained by the Essayist, that "the stream is *not purest* near the source;" a position from which it may be inferred that the chief office of development is, as rationalists contend, the rejection of foreign ingredients.

That the elements taken into Christianity from heresy and heathenism were really assimilated, *i. e.* that they were, in fact, *capable* of being converted into the substance of Christianity, Mr. Newman *does not even attempt to prove;* he merely states the fact of their adoption, and *assumes* that they must have been corrected by the operation of the "continuity of principle." But it certainly is not very easy to see how the principle of "mystical interpretation of the Bible," or the principle of "believing without proof," could remove all danger of corruption, when materials were imported from false religions, and introduced into Christianity. It is, in fact, impossible, on the theory of development, to avoid arriving at the conclusions which Rationalism has reached; and the test now under consideration is eminently conducive to such a result.

7. The *fourth* test, "early anticipation," *i. e.* the occasional statement by individuals of doctrines or principles, long prior to their formal and general development[p], is, doubtless, applicable, to some extent, as the Essayist shows it to be, to certain Romish doctrines and practices. But is it not equally applicable to Rationalism, or Socinianism, or Deism? Certainly it is so. This writer has shown that "anti-

[p] Essay, p. 77, 369, &c.

cipations" are not to be looked for merely in the Church, but in heresies and heathenism. With so liberal a scope, Socinianism and Rationalism can be at no loss for ample evidence of the *anticipation* of their tenets even in the earliest times. We know, in fact, that they invariably and unhesitatingly produce evidence of this kind, at least as strong as that which the Essayist has produced in favour of certain tenets of Romanism. The fourth test is therefore insufficient to prevent the advocates of the theory of development from becoming rationalists.

8. The *fifth* test, "logical sequence[q]," is doubtless one which, if accepted and acted on *bonâ fide*, is well calculated to discriminate between a true development and a corruption. "Logical sequence," however, at once brings the question before the tribunal of reason, and it is therefore a principle which will be readily allowed as a test by pure Rationalism. The rejection of revelation by rationalists is by them grounded on "logical sequence;" their rejection of all the doctrines peculiar to Christianity, and many even of those of natural religion, is grounded on the same principle of development by "logical sequence;" and if their logic be not very *conclusive*, they have at least the doctrine of the Essayist in their favour, whose "logical sequence," is exempt from the strict rules of logic[r]. With such facilities, Rationalism can easily make good its claim to be regarded as a true development of Christianity. But how it is possible to accept such a test as this consistently with the theory of development, it is not easy to see; for "logical sequence" implies at least a com-

[q] Essay, p. 80.

[r] Essay, p. 397. See above, p. 113.

prehension of the premisses from which conclusions are to be drawn. Now the theory of development is based on the principle, that the idea of Christianity was *imperfectly comprehended* at first, and that it has only been understood in the course of ages. How *true developments* of Christianity can have arisen, (even by "logical sequence" which does not admit of logical analysis,) from *imperfect* ideas of Christianity, is absolutely incomprehensible to ordinary understandings. The development of a science is generally understood to require at least a clear comprehension of its first principles, *i. e.* as clear a comprehension as it is possible for the human mind to attain.

9. The *sixth* test by which a true development is distinguished by Mr. Newman from a corruption is, "its being an addition which is conservative of what has gone before it[s]." This is doubtless in itself a good test to a certain extent; but then we must again remember that the theory of development is, that the idea of Christianity was at first imperfectly understood, and that development includes essentially the notion of correction of *imperfect* views;—that it is represented as a process analogous to that by which a stream, issuing from a muddy source, becomes *more pure* in time. It is impossible to maintain, consistently with this view, that development implies in all cases the preservation of what has gone before. To assert this, would be to assert that the essential idea or ideas of Christianity had been always preserved *perfectly*, even from the beginning, which the theory of development denies. All that it is possible to maintain consistently with this theory is, that

[s] Essay, p. 86—90.

developments must be conservative of the *essential* ideas which have gone before them; and this is equivalent merely to the first test proposed, and equally with it opens the way to rationalism, or to other views entirely opposed to the theory of development.

10. We now come to the *seventh* and last test of a true development, "chronic continuance," or lengthened duration[t]. It is argued, that corruption being "a transition state leading to a crisis," it is "a brief and rapid process." I confess that I am somewhat at a loss to see the connexion between the antecedent and the consequent here. *Why* must "a transition state" be "a brief and rapid process?"

Again, it is argued, that ideas "will not be *stationary* in their corruption any more than before it, and dissolution is that further state to which corruption tends. Corruption cannot, *therefore*, be of long standing[u]!" Here again, there is an apparent defect in the argument, for surely it does not necessarily follow that corruption must be rapid, because it cannot be "stationary." I do not wish to offer any captious objection; but the fallacy of such reasoning as this is obvious.

And plain facts decisively refute it. Were not the various forms of idolatry in the ancient heathen world corruptions of the original idea of religion? And yet was their continuance "brief and rapid?" The forms of Greek, and Egyptian, and Syrian, and Roman polytheism existed for much longer periods than the corruptions of Romanism have done. Look again, to the duration of the Dualistic, the Brahminical, the Buddhist corruptions of religion, each

[t] Essay, p. 91. [u] Ibid.

of which is of far greater antiquity than Christianity; and then say, that *duration* cannot be an attribute of corruption. Again, the existence of the Eutychian and Nestorian heresies, after the lapse of fourteen centuries, is another pretty clear proof that "corruptions" are not necessarily short-lived; and the Eastern Church, which Romanists regard as in error on various points, especially on the papal supremacy, is an additional proof to them of the same truth. It is plain that this test will not bear the slightest investigation: it is altogether fallacious: it cannot for a moment protect the theory of development from its rationalistic tendencies.

11. It now remains to examine the further check and safeguard which Mr. Newman has raised, in the alleged existence of a "developing *authority* in Christianity[v];" and to see how far this principle will aid the theory of development from arriving at rationalistic conclusions. Undoubtedly it is at first sight a very effectual barrier against such inferences, and *while it is held*, it will, to a great extent, prevent their adoption. If the infallibility of the Roman Church be admitted, its doctrines of course must be believed, just as the doctrines of the Bible must be (at least implicitly) received when its inspiration is admitted. But then, Mr. Newman himself only puts forward the doctrine of "the existence of a developing authority" as "an hypothesis[w]," and it is thus at once submitted to the examination of reason. Will it be able to make good its position, *consistently with the theory of development?* Let us see.

12. The positive arguments on which this hypo-

[v] Essay, p. 114. [w] P. 129.

thesis is founded, (omitting adventitious matter and answers to objections,) are as follows:—

*First.* "If the Christian doctrine, as originally taught, admits of true and important developments... this is a strong antecedent argument in favour of a provision in the dispensation for putting a seal of *authority* upon those developments[x]," *i.e.* for the existence of an infallible tribunal in the Church.

*Secondly.* "We have no reason to suppose that there is so great a distinction of dispensation between ourselves and the first generation of Christians, as that they had a living, infallible guidance, and we have not[y]... Preservation is involved in the idea of creation; ... as creation argues continual governance, so are apostles harbingers of popes[z]."

*Thirdly.* "The supremacy of conscience is the essence of natural religion; the supremacy of apostle, or pope, or Church, or bishop, is the essence of revealed; and when such external authority is taken away, the mind falls back again upon that inward guide which it possessed, even before revelation was vouchsafed[a];" *i.e.* if there be no infallible tribunal in the Church, we have only the guidance of our own conscience, without revelation.

*Fourthly.* "The common sense of mankind" supports the notion of such an "infallible" tribunal[b], for professing Christians in general look either to the Bible or the Church as such an authority.

*Fifthly.* "The absolute need of a spiritual supremacy is at present the strongest of arguments in favour of its supply[c]," *i.e.* it is particularly necessary

[x] Essay, p. 117, 118.
[y] P. 123.
[z] P. 124.
[a] P. 124.
[b] P. 125, 126.
[c] P. 127.

"when the human intellect is so busy, and opinion so indefinitely divided," as is now the case.

We are now to see how far these arguments are consistent with the theory of development, and how far they will prevent its advocates from arriving at rationalistic conclusions.

13. The *first* argument, then, appears wholly to set aside the essential idea of the theory of development, and the arguments on which it has been based. The notion of an infallible authority is absolutely and at once disproved by the principle, that the idea of Christianity has been only slowly and gradually *comprehended.* If popes and councils only gradually arrived at the full comprehension of Christianity, they could not have been infallible in former ages; and as the idea of Christianity is probably *still* (on the theory of development) imperfectly comprehended, popes and councils are probably still liable to error, and therefore their authority cannot be binding.

Besides this, the writer himself contends, that as all other philosophical and religious systems necessarily develope in the course of time, Christianity must follow their example, unless specific reasons be assigned against such a notion[d]; and this argument from analogy at once leads to the inference, that no developing authority is requisite in the case of Christianity, because, in general, no such authority is to be found in the development of human systems. Philosophies, and polities, and religious systems, are rarely developed by authority, but more commonly in opposition to authority. On this principle, the progress of ideas in the human mind, to

[d] Essay, p. 94—96.

which the development of Christianity is compared, is not necessarily under the guidance of any authority[e].

The Essayist objects to *this application* of the argument from analogy, because, in his opinion, the argument from analogy, "applied simply, overthrows the very notion of a revelation altogether[f]." Undoubtedly, there is too much reason to say that, as applied to establish this writer's theory of development, it *does* so. It represents Christianity as a progressive science, corresponding to merely human inventions. It embodies principles fatal to revelation; but having established those principles, it cannot recede from them afterwards. It cannot maintain that Christianity is to be progressive like ideas of human invention, and then pronounce that it is only to be developed in a mode which is without analogy; it cannot assert, at one moment, the most absolute freedom of idea, and, in the next, subjugate that idea to an infallible authority.

It is needless to say, that such striking inconsistencies as these cannot escape the notice of any inquiring mind, and that the whole argument will be at once seen to be untenable. Rationalism will most effectively turn the theory of development against any notion of a "developing *authority*."

[e] Mr. Newman says elsewhere, that the decision of great questions, affecting the essentials of religion, was *not* effected by *authority*. "Nor were these difficulties settled by authority, as far as we know, at the commencement of the religion; yet surely it is quite conceivable that an apostle might have dissipated them all in a few words, had the Divine wisdom thought fit. But, in matter of fact, the decision has been left to *time*, to the *slow process of thought*, the influence of *mind upon mind*, the *issues of controversy*, and the *growth of opinion*." Essay, p. 99. This furnishes a very strong presumptive argument against the necessity of an infallible tribunal.

[f] P. 122.

The two ideas are wholly irreconcileable and mutually destructive.

The remaining arguments will be found, on examination, to lead to conclusions which Infidelity will instantly accept.

For instance, in reference to the *second* argument: from the identity of position which is supposed to exist between ourselves and the first generation of Christians, and the admission that we have *now* no inspired teachers, Rationalism will argue that inspiration did not exist in the apostolic age.

As regards the *third* argument, Rationalism will accept it at once; for it always maintains the conclusion, that there is no reasonable alternative between belief in the Papal infallibility and the rejection of revelation; and it will be confirmed in its adoption of the latter course, by the weak and inconsistent arguments on which the former alternative is now maintained.

As regards the *fourth* argument, Rationalism propounds the human reason as "an infallible tribunal," and that on a systematic and coherent theory; and, on the principle of development, it infers that its view, being the *latest* exposition of Christianity and the most in accordance with the progress of the human mind, is to be preferred to all antiquated notions of *authority*.

To the *fifth* argument Rationalism will answer, that the activity of intellect and the difference of opinion in the present day, are parts or signs of a great development, and that it may be anticipated that all the systems of dogmatism, and supernaturalism, and orthodoxy, are about to give way before the onward impulses of the human mind.

14. The advocates of the theory of development may rest assured that rationalistic principles cannot be introduced into Christianity, without leading, sooner or later, to rationalistic conclusions. It is very possible that those who introduce an idea may be themselves unconscious of the results to which it will lead: they may recoil from those results in their own case; they may endeavour to arrest them in others; yet those results will not the less certainly follow. Semler, who laid down the leading principles of Rationalism, refused to accompany their development to the denial of the inspiration of Scripture, the rejection of all the peculiar dogmas of Christianity, and the disbelief of revelation. Nothing can be more dissimilar, certainly, than the results to which the theory of development has led Mr. Newman's adherents and the German rationalists; yet the same principle is at the root of both, the only difference being, that the former are anxious to evade the conclusions which the latter, by a bolder and more consistent course of argument, have arrived at. The whole system of tests, and of a developing authority, devised by Mr. Newman, is utterly and miserably powerless to arrest the march of reason to an infidel theory of development.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE ARGUMENTATIVE FOUNDATION OF THE THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT EXAMINED.

1. It might seem unnecessary to proceed further in the task of examining the dangerous theory of development which has been recently propounded; for, strictly speaking, nothing more need be added, when that theory has been proved to lead to conclusions which are essentially rationalistic and subversive of the Christian revelation. But the importance of the subject seems to require some notice of the arguments on which this theory has been made to rest, in order that no doubt may remain of its utter falsehood and baselessness.

Now, be it distinctly understood at the commencement of this discussion, that "the theory of development" is something very different from the admission of "developments." In denying the former, it is far from my intention to dispute the existence of the latter. The term "development" is indeed a novelty; and, like the term "fundamental," it is made to stand for a great number of different ideas: the Essayist has employed it in perhaps a dozen different senses in his work. But since it has become an admitted term in theology, there can

be no difficulty in recognizing under this new appellation such old and familiar ideas as "inference," "interpretation," "consequence," "application," "statement," &c.

It is evident, then, that the great mass of dogmatical statements included in the creeds, the articles, and in all existing theological systems, are, in some sense, developments, *i. e.* they are not expressly written in Holy Scripture. It is nowhere *written*, that there is a Trinity of persons in the Godhead, of one substance, power, and eternity; or that Christ was a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men; or, that the Old Testament is not contrary to the New; or, that the Romish doctrine of purgatory is untrue; or, that the Bishop of Rome is head of the Universal Church. These, and similar developments, are all inferences from God's word.

Developments of Christianity are of various kinds. Some are expressions of revelation; others are deductions from revelation. Some are legitimate inferences from God's word; others are illegitimate. Some are certain; others are only probable, or possible, or doubtful. Some are positive; others are negative. Some are doctrinal; others practical. These distinctions, some of which seem to have escaped the notice of the advocates of "the theory of development," it is necessary to attend to.

2. There are developments, or inferences, which are mere *expressions* of the ideas conveyed in Scripture. Thus, when we say that the Son and the Holy Ghost are distinct "Persons," we merely express that distinction by which the Son is not the Father, or the Holy Ghost the Son, and which is the doctrine

of holy Scripture. Thus Scripture teaches that Christ is both God and Man; and it is only a different expression of this doctrine to say, that He is of two natures in one person; that the propriety of each nature is not lost by this union; and that there are accordingly two wills, the Divine and the Human, in Jesus Christ. All these are but expressions of the original ideas communicated by revelation. The dogmatical language of the Athanasian Creed is of this character. Many of its definitions are not taken from the actual language of Scripture, but are expressions of the idea of the Trinity which Scripture, as a whole, conveys; and many other definitions and expressions of the same doctrine might be developed. This results from the undeniable truth, that revelation was intended to convey to us certain ideas under the clothing of language; and that a variety of language is employed in Scripture itself to communicate these ideas; from which it is clear that Scripture ideas are capable of many various expressions or developments. In fact, all preaching and teaching of the Gospel supposes necessarily, that ideas are communicated by revelation, which are capable of development by uninspired individuals; for in such cases there is much of the *expression* of doctrine, which arises from those individuals themselves. Mr. Newman seems originally to have contemplated the existence only of developments of this kind in Christianity; at least his Sermons before the University apparently advocate no other kind of developments.

3. There are also developments which are *deductions* from revelation; which follow, or are conceived to follow, from its principles. Of these there are in-

numerable instances. The primacy of the Bishop of Rome is a development of this kind; the doctrine of purgatory another; the worship of the Virgin and saints another; the lawfulness of liturgies, the authority of synods, the doctrine of passive obedience and the Divine right of kings, the temporary character of the sacraments and the Christian ministry, the validity of Presbyterian ordinations, are all developments of certain principles which are really, or are conceived to be, taught by Scripture. From the principle that the Scripture is the word of God, some persons arrive at the further development that it is exclusively the *teacher* of Christians, and that the Church and its institutions are superfluous. From the lawfulness of asking the prayers of our brethren on earth, it is inferred that we may invoke the departed saints and the angels.

4. It is clear that some of these expressions of the ideas of revelation, and deductions from them, are *legitimate*, and others are *illegitimate*. That is to say, there are unlawful developments as well as lawful. Mr. Newman makes this distinction. He considers that the former are corrupt developments, or "corruptions." "A false or unfaithful *development*," says Mr. Newman, "is called a corruption[a]."

5. There are different degrees of *evidence* in developments. Some are capable of clear proof from Scripture, and others are not so. Developments are thus sometimes articles of faith, sometimes pious or probable opinions, sometimes possibly true; sometimes mere human inferences or opinions, sometimes errors, and sometimes heresies[b].

[a] Essay, p. 44. [b] This is admitted by Mr. Newman, p. 116.

6. There are *negative* developments as well as *positive*. Mr. Newman and Mr. Ward have altogether left this out of view: they have assumed that all true developments are necessarily positive. The former, amongst his tests of a true development, reckons "preservative additions." Developments, he says, "which do but contradict and reverse the course of doctrine which has been developed *before them*, and out of which they spring, are certainly corrupt[c]." A true development is "one which is conservative of the course of development which went before it; which is that development and something besides: it is an addition which illustrates, not obscures, corroborates, not corrects, the body of thought from which it proceeds; and this is its characteristic as contrasted with a corruption[d]." And this is illustrated by the case of conversion from a false to a true religion, which, it is said, "is ever of a *positive*, not a *negative* character[e]." Mr. Ward's notion of development throughout his work is precisely the same.

Now it is evident that this test of true development is incorrect. Revelation includes quite as many negative articles as it does positive; because in every truth which it teaches it *condemns* the contrary error. If it be the doctrine of revelation that "Christ is truly God," it is equally its doctrine that He is "*not* a mere man." If it be asserted that there are "three

[c] Essay, p. 86.

[d] P. 87, 88.

[e] P. 88. The love of theory was surely never carried further than in maintaining that the early converts to Christianity did not reject the follies and crimes of polytheism. See a most strange assertion of Mr. Ward's on this subject, (Ideal, p. 579,) which is refuted by a perusal of the ancient Apologies for Christianity.

persons in the Godhead," it is equally asserted that Unitarianism is false. If God be a pure Spirit, it follows that He is not a body. If Christ be eternal, Arianism is to be rejected. If the doctrine of development be true, the doctrine of tradition must be false, and *vice versâ*. The Mosaic dispensation comprised negative articles: the commandments are generally negative. It was a negative development which led Hezekiah to break the brazen serpent. The New Testament included prohibitions as well as positive laws. It forbad the worship of false gods. It denounced the inculcation of new doctrines contrary to what had been taught by our Lord and the apostles. All the councils of the Church afford instances, in their condemnations of heresies, of the principle of *negative* developments. It was on this principle that the Council of Nice pronounced anathema against those who asserted that there was a time when Christ did not exist; that the council of Ephesus, with Cyril of Alexandria, condemned the doctrines of Nestorius; the council of Chalcedon those of Eutyches; the fifth council those of Origen: in these, and other cases without number, the development of orthodox doctrine has been of a negative character, and not merely of a positive. Heresies have, in fact, been just as frequently positive as negative: they have been perversions or exaggerations of existing doctrines as frequently as denials or rejections of them.

7. But it is now time to notice more specifically the arguments on which Mr. Newman bases his theory of development, *i. e.* of a progress in the comprehension of Christianity. I shall here pass over extraneous matter, and only notice the arguments in proof

of this theory, as they present themselves successively in the Essay on Development.

And here first occurs this question. *What necessity exists for the theory of development?* Why have its authors felt themselves bound to devise in the nineteenth century a doctrine altogether unknown to theology for eighteen centuries? Mr. Newman finds the necessity for such a theory in certain phenomena of Christianity, which he thinks otherwise inexplicable. He is of opinion that several articles of faith are not supported by a *consensus* in the ante-Nicene Church[f]; that while we fully believe that the ancient creeds "imply, or rather intend" the doctrine of the Trinity, "nothing in the *mere letter* of those documents leads to that belief[g];" that several of the Fathers speak ignorantly or incorrectly on some leading articles of belief[h]; that although "the orthodoxy of the early Divines, or the *cogency* of their testimony among *fair* inquirers," is not impugned, still the positive evidence which their writings supply is very small[i]; that we are not "to assume that they are all of one school, which is a point to be proved;" or, in other words, we are not to assume that they held any uniform belief on the doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.[j]; that the argument for the Trinity from the use of the doxologies in the Church is inconclusive, because the worship of angels was equally practised[k]; that there is no sufficient evidence from the early Church in favour of the doctrine of original sin, or of the real presence[l], and that there are statements which *primâ*

[f] Essay, p. 11, 12.
[g] P. 13.
[h] P. 13, 14.
[i] P. 15, 16.
[j] P. 16.
[k] P. 17.
[l] P. 17—24.

*facie* are opposed to them. The result of the whole argument is, that there is no convincing evidence, that the principal articles of the faith were understood or believed in the primitive Church. This line of argument is derived not only from Du Perron, Petavius, and Huetius, but from Sandius, Whitby, and other opponents of the Nicene faith; from Jurieu and Daillé, the assailants of the primitive Church; and from Wegscheider and the rationalists[m].

8. Now in reply to these arguments we have to inquire what is meant in reference to the belief of the early Church. Is it meant, that the primitive Christians were really ignorant of the doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.; or that they held heterodox opinions on these subjects? Mr. Newman does not venture to affirm this: he even disclaims such a notion. It was, he says, the *intention* of the Church to include the notion of the Trinity in the doxologies. The Fathers were in no degree heterodox *really*, and their evidence is, to *fair* inquirers, quite sufficient. If this be the case, it is clear, that whatever may be the apparent diversities of doctrinal expressions in the primitive Church; whatever be the apparent diversities between those expressions and others adopted in later times, the *same ideas* were included under all; the same doctrine was held from the beginning; and there is no necessity for any theory to explain these diversities; they will be solved by a simple application of the rule of faith to all of them. This has been, in fact, done by such writers

[m] Petavius, lib. i. de Trinit. c. 5, 8; Huetius, Origenian. lib. ii. c. 2; Sandius, Nucleus Hist. Ecclesiast.; Jurieu, Past. Epist. vi.; Whitby, Disquisitiones Modestæ in Bulli Defens.; Wegscheider, Inst. Theol. pars ii. c. iii. § 88. See Waterland, on the Trinity, chap. vii.

as Bishop Bull; and the Essayist himself admits, that "he does this triumphantly[n]." There can indeed be no doubt in the mind of any Catholic believer on this point, when he remembers the words of St. Athanasius to the Arians: "How many fathers can ye assign to your phrases? Not one of the understanding and wise . . . For the faith which the council (of Nice) has confessed in writing, that is the faith of the Catholic Church[o]." And the objections raised by Mr. Newman and his disciples are at once put an end to by an authority which they will not fail to recognize, that of the Jesuit Perrone, who, in reply to such objections, says, "In the doctrine of the Divinity of the Son, the ante-Nicene Fathers are agreed and unanimous, *nor can one of them be quoted* who openly teaches the contrary, nor has any such ever been produced by Unitarians. But when a certain mode of expressing it, or (to employ modern language) a 'terminology' had not yet been universally adopted, some of them did not speak of it with accuracy, according to Petavius[p]."

9. If, as Mr. Newman admits, the evidence from primitive antiquity be sufficient for *fair* inquirers, it

[n] Essay, p. 159. Petavius, who had made assertions equally rash and unfounded in regard to the doctrine of the ante-Nicene Fathers, was afterwards obliged to explain and reform them in the following manner: "Præter manifeste hæreticos, alios docui, qui *communem rectamque fidem*, et ut sæpius dico, substantiam ipsam dogmatis tenentes, in consectariis quibusdam nonnihil ab regula deflectunt: alios, qui in omnibus re consentientes, loquendi dumtaxat modo dissident ab usitata præscriptione, quæ non solum recte sentire, sed rectis etiam verbis explicare quid sentias jubet." Petav. Theol. Dogm. tom. ii. præf.

[o] Athanasius, Defence of Nicene Definition, ch. vi. p. 49 (Oxford translation).

[p] Perrone, Prælect. Theolog. tom. ii. p. 380. Contention with heresies, according to Theodoret, (Dial. iii. t. iv. p. 170,) sometimes accounts for inaccuracy of expression.

would seem to be all that could be desired. It is clear that Scripture itself, or the teaching of our Lord and his apostles, only furnishes such evidence as is calculated to convince inquirers of this kind. The great doctrines of Christianity are not taught in such a manner as to put an end to cavil and doubt, where men are unwilling to receive those doctrines. The great mass of heretics in all ages have, we know, defended their doctrines from holy Scripture. One of Mr. Newman's disciples has stated very strongly the apparent difficulties of Scripture in reference to certain leading articles of the faith[q].

In fact, it is a favourite and well-known argument with Romanists, that Scripture contains passages which are not easily reconcileable with the leading doctrines of faith and morality. Dr. Milner, in his "End of Controversy," says: "It is obvious that if any articles are particularly necessary to be known and believed, they are those which point to the God whom we are to adore, and the moral precepts which we are to observe. Now, is it demonstratively evident, from mere Scripture, *that Christ is God, and to be adored as such?* Most modern Protestants of eminence answer NO; and, in defence of their assertion, quote the following among other texts." And then, after dwelling on some difficult texts in reference to moral duties, he adds, "These are a few among hundreds of other difficulties regarding our moral duties, which, though confronted by other texts seemingly of a contrary meaning, nevertheless show that the Scripture is not, of itself, demonstratively clear in points of first-rate importance[r]."

[q] See Ward's Ideal, p. 487, 488.

[r] Milner, End of Controversy, p. 75.

From these passages it is obvious, that the very same observations which the Essayist has made on the nature of the testimony of the primitive Church to the great doctrines of revelation, have been applied by his own adherents, and by Romanists, to the Holy Scripture itself. In fact, it has been their invariable language.

And hence we arrive at the following conclusion. If the variations of statement which he has pointed out in the records of the early Church imply that the idea of Christianity was not comprehended; it equally follows that the apostles and evangelists, and our Lord himself, did not comprehend the idea of Christianity; for the same kind of difficulties may be found in the Scripture as in the writings of the early Christians. In short, if he maintains, on *this* ground, that there must necessarily have been a progress or development of Christian doctrine, the commencement of that progress cannot be fixed subsequently to the apostolic teaching; it must include the apostolic teaching and the teaching of our blessed Lord. Or, in other words, we, in the present day, must be far more enlightened, and must comprehend the truths of religion far more perfectly, than the Founders of Christianity! I do not know what Rationalism, or Deism, or even Atheism can demand more than this, as a principle. When Mr. Newman objects to our "assuming" that the writers of the primitive Church held the same belief, notwithstanding some superficial differences, he prevents himself from "assuming" that the writers of the New Testament held the same belief. He therefore cannot draw any line between the one case and the other, or maintain that apparent variations in Scripture must

necessarily be reconcileable without the aid of his theory of development, when that theory is held necessary to explain similar variations in the early Church.

10. The notion that the faith of the Church was not settled at first on the great doctrines of Christianity, is one which is familiar to Rationalism. Bretschneider argues, that the continual variations which history shows in the conception of religious doctrines, prove that all uniformity of belief is impossible. The Jesuit Perrone replies, that such variations have indeed existed "amongst those who dissent from the authority of the Church, but not amongst the docile children of the Church, in articles of faith defined by her;" for "the Catholic Church has *always believed, held, and taught the same thing* in what relates to faith[s]." On the other hand, the German rationalists, as he observes, "*vary* their professions of faith according to the diversities of times or the progress of science[t]."

11. The Essayist next asserts, that "from the nature of the human mind, *time* is necessary for the full *comprehension* and perfection of great ideas, such as those of Christianity[u]." Without entering at any length on a reply to this assertion, as an argument for the theory of development, it is easy to show that if it be legitimately applied by the author, it proves something more than he intends or would admit.

Suppose that the errors of the fourth, or the sixth, or the sixteenth century had occurred in the time of

[s] Perrone, Prælect. Theol. tom. i. p. 239.

[t] Ibid. p. 240.

[u] Essay, p. 27.

the apostles, or in the age immediately following, would the doctrine of the Church at once have been found in contrariety to them or would it not? Would there have been definitions or expressions of faith substantially agreeing with those of later times, or substantially different? If the Church would at once have been able, in virtue of the idea of Christianity communicated by the apostles, to have repelled any assignable heresy, her comprehension of the idea of Christianity was perfect even from the beginning. But if she could *not* have condemned such heresies as Arianism, or Socinianism, or Tritheism, or Pelagianism, there must have been a *change* in her belief. It was not merely a development or expansion of an idea, but an alteration in its essential character. If Arianism would have been permitted and adopted by the apostles and the first believers, while it was repelled from the belief of the fourth century as an ingredient foreign to the idea of Christianity, the idea of Christianity must have been essentially different in one age and the other. Now, this would be destructive even of Mr. Newman's fundamental principle: it would totally destroy the notion of a development in which *the essential idea is preserved throughout.*

12. I now come to this writer's more systematic arguments for the existence of such a development as he contends for; *i. e.* a development in which the idea of Christianity is supposed to be only gradually comprehended in the course of ages, and the real knowledge of the doctrines of revelation is continually on the increase. It is this which constitutes the essence of his theory of development, according to which the most essential doctrines of the faith were either

unknown or contradicted, through want of information, in the primitive Church. Bearing this in mind, let us proceed to examine the arguments advanced for such developments.

"If Christianity is a fact, and can be made subject-matter of exercises of the reason, and impresses an idea of itself on our minds, that idea will, *in course of time*, develope in a series of ideas connected and harmonious with one another. . . . The more claim an idea has to be considered living, the more various will be its aspects; and the more social and political is its nature, the more complicated and subtle will be its developments, and the longer and more eventful will be its course. Such is Christianity. . . . It may be objected, that inspired documents, such as the holy Scriptures, at once determine its doctrine, without further trouble. But they are intended to create *an idea*, and that idea is not in the sacred text, but in the mind of the reader; and the question is, whether that idea is communicated to him, in its completeness and minute accuracy, in its first apprehension, or expands in his heart and intellect, and comes to perfection *in the course of time?* Nor could it be maintained, without extravagance, that the letter of the New Testament . . comprises a delineation *of all possible forms* which a Divine message will assume when submitted to a multitude of minds. . . . Nor can it fairly be made a difficulty, that thus to treat of Christianity is to level it, in some sort, to sects and doctrines of the world, and to impute to it the imperfections which characterize the productions of man. It is, externally, what the Apostle calls an 'earthly vessel,' being the religion of men. And, considered as such, it grows 'in

wisdom and stature;' but the powers which it wields, and the words which proceed out of its mouth, attest its miraculous nativity. Unless, then, some special ground of exception can be assigned, it is as evident that Christianity, as a doctrine and worship, will develope in the minds of recipients, as that it conforms, in other respects, in its external propagation or its political framework, to the general methods by which the course of things is carried forward[v]."

Now, on this argument it may be observed, that it goes only to prove that there will probably be "developments" in Christianity; that is, that it will, like other ideas, present "various aspects" and "different forms" in different ages. This is at once conceded. The different external circumstances in which Christianity is placed in different ages will, of course, lead to corresponding developments; but it remains to be proved, that those developments imply any increased comprehension of the idea or ideas of Christianity. Different "aspects" and different "forms" of revealed truth do not imply any increased knowledge of truth—any progress or advance in the faith of the Church. The ideas of Christianity may remain identically the same amidst innumerable developments; those developments may either refer to mere external, ritual, and disciplinary matters, which revelation has left to the Church to regulate; or else to the mere form in which ancient truths are presented.

The progress of an individual mind in the study of holy Scripture, and its gradual comprehension of the

[v] Essay, p. 94—96.

truth, does not afford any parallel to the supposed case of the Church's gradual comprehension of Christianity. An individual cannot in the nature of things acquire knowledge except progressively; but we cannot thence argue that the general mind of *the Church* has been progressive in all ages. It is at least possible that the very first generation of Christians may, by apostolical teaching, have attained to all the comprehension of the ideas of revelation which it was *intended* that man should possess; and that this comprehension may have been preserved in the general mind of the Church, in after-times, without any change.

On the whole, then, it is evident that this argument in support of the Essayist's theory, is wholly insufficient. It furnishes grounds certainly for expecting "developments" in Christianity, but none whatever for anticipating a progress or growth in the comprehension of the ideas of revelation.

13. "If Christianity," he continues, "be an universal religion, suited not to one locality or period, but to all times and places, it cannot but *vary in its relations and dealings* towards the world around it, that is, it will develope[w]." Principles require to be thrown into new shapes occasionally. All Christians develope or make new deductions from Scripture as circumstances call for them; for the remedy of errors cannot precede their rise[x].

All this is very true, but it does not establish the theory for which Mr. Newman is contending: it does not infer *any growth in the comprehension of Christianity:* it merely deseribes the developments

[w] Essay, p. 96. [x] P. 96, 97.

in "form" and "aspect," and expression, and other externals, which have been already fully admitted.

14. "When we turn to the consideration of particular doctrines on which Scripture lays the greatest stress, we shall see that it is absolutely impossible for them to remain in *the mere letter* of Scripture, if they are to be more than mere words, or to convey a definite idea to the recipient. When it is declared that 'the Word became flesh,' three wide questions open upon us, in the very announcement. What is meant by 'the Word,' what by 'flesh,' what by 'became?' The answers to these involve a process of investigation, and are developments. Moreover, when they have been made, they will suggest a series of secondary questions[y].'" All this may be admitted as true, but it is insufficient to prove that there has been any growth of knowledge, any greater comprehension of the idea of Christianity in later times than in earlier. Of course there are developments or *interpretations* of Scripture, which are articles of faith: our creeds consist generally of such developments; and many doctrines also may be deduced from such developments, which are more or less probable; but which do not add to the deposit of the faith originally received, or imply any advance in its comprehension.

15. It is alleged that "great questions exist in the subject-matter of which Scripture treats, which Scripture does not solve; questions too, so real, so practical, that they must be answered, and answered, unless we suppose a new revelation, from the revela-

[y] Essay, p. 97, 98.

tion which we have, that is, *by development*[z]." Amongst such questions are included the canon of Scripture and its inspiration, its interpretation, its sufficiency, the baptism of infants, the remission of sins committed after baptism, the state of the soul in the intermediate state. "The *gaps*," if the word may be used, "which occur in the structure of the original creed of the Church, make it probable that those developments which grow out of the truths which lie around them, were intended to complete it[a]."

It is remarkable that the argument thus employed to prove the necessity for developments, is by Roman Catholic writers generally urged to prove the necessity for unwritten apostolical tradition; and it is undoubtedly at least as effective, for such a purpose, as for proving developments of Scripture. Bellarmine argues for the existence of apostolical unwritten tradition, on this ground amongst others: "Because there are many things which could not have been unknown, and yet which are not contained in Scripture;" and amongst these, he mentions the inspiration, the canon, and the interpretation of Scripture; the perpetual virginity of the Blessed Virgin; infant baptism; purgatory[b]. The same argument is to be found in Milner's End of Controversy[c], and generally in all the controversial writings of Romanists.

Here, then, Mr. Newman is at variance with the current of Roman Catholic theology. If his principle be right, Bellarmine and Milner were in error. He

[z] Essay on Development, p. 98.

[a] P. 102.

[b] Bellarm. Controv. Fid. t. i. p. 105.

[c] Letters x. xi.

supposes that there are "gaps" in the original creed of the Church; points which were left unsettled by the Apostles; which were at first not filled up by the Church, and on which her early belief varied. The creed of the Church was thus more limited than it afterwards became. New articles of faith were added to the original belief in after-ages. Novelty and change of doctrine become the test of religious life. The decision in these cases "has been left to time, to the slow process of thought, the influence of mind upon mind, the issues of controversy, and the growth of opinion[d]."

If such has been the case, the inference might be fairly drawn, that these questions themselves are in a great measure *open questions*—that opinion may safely vary on such points; and that whatever decisions may be arrived at, are never invested with the authority which attaches to articles of faith. This inference from the facts stated by the writer seems to be quite as legitimate as that which he actually connects with them, viz. the notion of *a growth* in the comprehension of revelation. But we must altogether demur to his statement of the case. We deny that such questions as the inspiration, and interpretation, and sufficiency of Scripture, the validity of infant baptism, the true mode of remitting sins after baptism, or the state of the soul in the intermediate state, were in point of fact left undetermined in the Scripture or the early Church; and if later ages have added developments or further particulars to the ancient doctrines, or have perverted them, it does not follow that there has been any greater comprehension of revelation at one period than the other.

[d] Essay, p. 99.

From the fact that developments have taken place, which fill up the "gaps" of revelation, an inference is drawn, that they were probably *intended* to complete them, on the same principle by which we infer design in the visible creation from the existence of need and its supply[e]. Now, of course, if we could say that a particular doctrine developed from revelation is as certainly the true answer to some necessary question connected with revelation, as we can say that certain physical supplies meet certain physical necessities, we might reasonably infer design in the one case as in the other; but then we must first be assured, that the doctrine developed from revelation supplies the *real* answer to questions connected with it; that it actually fills up its "gaps." On what reasonable grounds we can attain such a conviction, it is difficult to see. There is, however, one inference from the whole of this argument which its author has apparently not observed. It is this: if uninspired reason be capable of filling up the "gaps" of revelation; of supplying articles of faith on which revelation has been silent; there seems to be no necessity for supposing that it was incapable of discovering the whole of revelation, or that it needed the help of inspired teaching. Once grant to human reason the power of supplying the deficiencies of revelation, and revelation itself becomes the operation of man's intellect.

16. "The method of revelation in Scripture," is urged as another reason for inferring such developments as this writer speaks of. It is remarked that the prophecies of Scripture, and the whole Bible, are

[e] Essay on Development, p. 101, 102.

written on the principle of development. The earlier prophecies are expanded in the later. "As the revelation proceeds, it is ever new, yet ever old. St. John, who completes it, declares that he writes 'no new commandment unto his brethren,' but an old commandment which they 'had from the beginning.' And then he adds, 'a new commandment I write unto you.' The same test of development is suggested by our Lord's words on the Mount, as has already been noticed, 'Think not that I am come to destroy the law and the Prophets. I am not come to destroy, but to fulfil.' He does not reverse, but perfect what has gone before[f]." The doctrine of sacrifice is instanced as having been developed gradually by the Prophets, and by our Lord[g]. It is also remarked, that the same gradual development of doctrine is to be inferred from the style of our Lord's teaching, which is given in germ, consisting of concise and pregnant enunciations, which were evidently capable of development[h]; and that, in fact, a continual development of doctrine took place in the New Testament, even to the completion of the Canon[i]. And it is contended, that it is impossible to fix an historical point, at which the growth of doctrine ceased in the Church; that St. Ignatius in the first century had to establish the doctrine of Episcopacy; that the creed itself was an incomplete summary, and the Church went forth from the world in haste, 'with their dough before it was leavened[j];' that the rise and growth of the chosen people, though determined in the Lord's counsels from the begin-

[f] Essay on Development, p. 103.
[g] P. 104.
[h] P. 104—107.
[i] P. 107.
[j] Ibid.

ning, wear a merely human appearance, and seem to have arisen in the progress of events[k].

The whole of this argument infers a forgetfulness of the essential difference between the case of revelation, as existing subsequently to the apostolic age, and as existing in preceding times. Since the time of the Apostles, it is *admitted* by every one, that there have been no inspired teachers: previously, there had been a succession of inspired teachers, or of actual revelations from God, even from the foundation of the world. Now it is perfectly undeniable that God Himself did gradually develope the scheme of Redemption as time advanced, by means of Prophets and Apostles, and other inspired teachers; but it does not follow that *man—uninspired man* can do the same, or that any such development is to be expected under Christianity. The absence of inspired teachers since the apostolic age is in itself a sufficient sign that revelation was at once and perfectly delivered then; and this is only what might have been anticipated from the infinite superiority of a dispensation predicted from the foundation of the world, to which preceding dispensations were introductory, and which God Himself descended from Heaven to establish. Mr. Newman's remark, that the Gospel is distinguished from the law (and we might add, from the patriarchal dispensation) by its assertion of opinions or doctrines[l], is to a certain extent true. The patriarchal and the Mosaic creed was very limited: previously to the Gospel, revelation consisted chiefly in precepts of obedience, and comparatively little in the disclosure of mysteries as objects of faith.

[k] Essay, p. 108—110. [l] P. 339.

The ancient ceremonies and ordinances all pointed to the truth which was afterwards to be revealed. The Apostle reminds us, that "God who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spoke unto the Fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by His Son;" and by the Son all mysteries were revealed which were requisite for salvation.

17. Another argument in behalf of the theory of development is derived from the structure of Scripture, which is "so unsystematic and various," and in "a style so figurative and indirect," that "of no reader, whatever may be his study of it, can it be said that he has mastered every doctrine which it contains[m]." Bishop Butler's remarks are quoted, who was of opinion that the prophetic parts of revelation are not yet fully understood, and that truths may be hereafter elicited from the Scripture which are at present undiscovered[n]. We may readily admit the correctness of this conjecture; but I do not see how it will materially aid the object for which it is here brought forward. That the doctrines of the faith always received may be in time elicited from passages not previously known to contain them,—that truths which are not articles of faith may be probably collected from passages which had not been conceived to include them,—that prophecies may be understood better at or near the time of their fulfilment than when they were delivered,—all this is very credible; but then it does not show that the knowledge of revelation, *i. e.* of the idea of revelation, is in any degree increased as time advances. Bishop Butler was certainly not contemplating the development of "new *articles of faith* or develop-

[m] Essay, p. 110. [n] Analogy, ii. 3.

ments imperative on our acceptance," as the Essayist himself admits[o], he merely contemplated the possibility of developments in Christianity; and this, the writer adds, "is the point at present in question." This is not so: the writer's argument throughout is to establish his primary position, which is, not merely that "there are developments" in Christianity, but that those developments infer *a clearer comprehension of the idea of Christianity in process of time;* that the apostolic age comprehended only the rudiments or elements of Christianity, and that we in the present day are indefinitely raised above the Fathers in the comprehension of the truth.

The writer adds, that such doctrines as purgatory, the communication of the merits of the saints, absolution, extreme unction, voluntary poverty, the worship of saints and relics, "rest upon definite, even though sometimes obscure, sentences of Scripture[p];" from whence, I suppose, we are to infer, that these doctrines are *instances* of such discoveries as he has been just speaking of, *i. e.* of truths developed in process of time from obscure passages of Scripture. Of course it is not meant to assume, that *all* doctrines or practices deduced, whether in ancient or modern times, from texts, whether obscure or otherwise, are articles of faith, or even probably right. We may, then, safely say, that when it shall have been proved that the doctrines in question have been *rightly and sufficiently* elicited from such obscure texts, and that they are not inconsistent with other texts and the tradition of the Church, we shall be quite ready to tolerate them in others, even though we may deny that such doctrines, having been unknown for many ages to the

[o] Essay, p. 111. [p] P. 112.

Church of Christ, can be articles of faith, or binding on our acceptance.

18. Another argument remains to be considered, which, if it were valid, would, doubtless, wholly supersede the necessity for any further examination. "Scripture," it is said, "*distinctly anticipates* the development of Christianity, both as a polity *and as a doctrine*[q]." The proofs of this position are derived, not from any express declarations of our Lord or His Apostles, but from certain *parables*, to which the writer affixes a mystical interpretation in accordance with his own views.

Now, at the outset of this discussion, a protest must be made against such a mode of establishing important doctrines. We know that parables are from their very nature not intended to furnish clear proofs of doctrine, independently of other instruction, but rather to reward the pains and labour of those who have learned the truth from other sources. The attempt to prove doctrines from obscure parables only, to the exclusion of the plainer parts of Scripture, has been a characteristic of heresy from the earliest times. Irenæus remarks in several places on the way in which the Valentinians attempted to prove their doctrines from parables, omitting the more plain and clear parts of Scripture—a procedure which he compares to the conduct of those who built their house upon the sand[r].

Let us now come to the proofs themselves. "In

[q] Essay, p. 112.

[r] "Quia autem parabolæ possunt multas recipere absolutiones; ex ipsis de inquisitione Dei affirmare, relinquentes quod certum, et indubitatum, et verum est, valde præcipitantium se in periculum, et irrationabilium esse, quis non amantium veritatem confitebitur? Et numquid hoc est non in petra firma, et valida, et in

one of our Lord's parables," says Mr. Newman, "the kingdom of heaven is even compared to 'a grain of mustard-seed, which a man took and hid in his field; which indeed is the least of all seeds, but when it is grown it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree,' and, as St. Mark words it, 'shooteth out great branches, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof.' And again, in the same chapter of St. Mark, 'So is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed into the ground, and should sleep and rise night and day, and the seed should spring and grow up, he knoweth not how; for the earth bringeth forth fruit of herself.' Here an internal element of life, *whether principle or doctrine*, is spoken of, rather than any mere external manifestation. . . . Again, the parable of the leaven describes the development of doctrine in another respect, in its active, engrossing, and assimilating power[s]."

19. That the parable of the mustard-seed "distinctly anticipates the development of Christianity as a polity," in the sense of its rapid growth and spread in the world, is at once evident; but that it refers to the growth of *doctrine* in the Church, or the formation of its *polity*, strictly speaking, is an assertion which has not been proved. The Fathers interpret it differently. Thus Chrysostom speaks of it as "signifying that in any case the Gospel should be *spread abroad*. Therefore He brought forward the similitude of this herb, which has a very strong similitude to the subject in hand. . . . Thus He means to

aperto posita, ædificare suam domum; sed in incertum effusæ arenæ? Unde et facilis est eversio hujusmodi ædificationis." Iren. adv. Hæres. lib. ii. c. 27. See the whole context, and also chapter x. of the same book.

[s] Essay, p. 112, 113.

set forth the most decisive sign of its *greatness:* 'Even so, then, shall it be with respect to the Gospel too,' saith he. Yea, for His disciples were weakest of all, and least of all; but, nevertheless, because of the great power that was in them, *it hath been unfolded in every part of the world*[t]." A conjectural interpretation of this parable, supported by no authority, and opposed to the general tenor of Scripture, can have no weight.

20. The parable of the Seed cast into the ground and growing secretly, is one which has been very variously interpreted, and Mr. Newman himself does not seem to feel confident that it refers to any development of *doctrine* in the Church. He says that it refers to some "internal element of life, whether *principle* or *doctrine*." Without pretending to affirm that any particular exposition of this parable has been conclusively established as the true one, it may at least be affirmed, that the position for which the Essayist contends, cannot subsist on such a doubtful foundation as this. If, for instance, we admit that the parable refers to a "principle," which is an internal element of life in the kingdom of God, why may we not interpret it of the preaching of "the word," of which our Lord had been speaking just before under this very figure of sowing "seed[u]?"

[t] Chrysost. in Matth. Hom. xlvi. al. xlvii. Oper. t. vii. p. 483. So also Theophylact (in Marc. iv.) ἀλλὰ σπαρὲν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς τὸ κήρυγμα, ἐπλατύνθη καὶ ηὐξήθη· ὥστε τὰ πετεινὰ τοῦ οὐρανοῦ, τουτέστι, πάντας τοὺς μετεώρους καὶ ὑψηλοὺς τῷ φρονήματι καὶ τῇ γνώσει, ἐπ' αὐτῷ κατασκηνοῦν. It is observable, that this was assumed to be the meaning of the parable by the writer himself, in No. 85 of the "Tracts for the Times," p. 63, where it is said that such texts as "the mustard-seed," "imply the calling and conversion of the Gentiles."

[u] Thus it is understood by Theophylact (in loc.): σπόρον

And again, the growth which is here spoken of, may be referred to the perpetual process by which souls are prepared in "the kingdom of God" on earth for His kingdom above. I do not think it necessary to contend for the correctness of any particular interpretation of the parable; but what we should have expected from the writer is, some proof that the growth here spoken of refers to such a development of doctrine in successive ages as he contends for.

21. The parable of the leaven is the last scriptural evidence which is adduced in proof of this theory. That the "leaven" means Christianity, may be admitted; but the process of leavening may be referred, not to any development of doctrine in successive ages, but to the gradual spread of Christianity amongst the "mass;" that is, amongst the inhabitants of this earth; which has been, and is, continually proceeding. Such is the interpretation of Chrysostom:— "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, &c. For as this converts the large quantity of meal into its own quality, even so shall ye *convert the whole world*[v]." Augustine also understands the meal to signify "the human race[w]." Mr. Newman does not attempt any proof that his interpretation of the parable is correct; and as this, as well as his interpretation of the two parables already noticed, evidently *requires* such proofs, it may be safely inferred

δὲ ἔβαλεν ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς, τοῦ Εὐαγγελίου τὸ κήρυγμα. The growth of the seed, according to this Father, signifies the increase of holiness in the Christian soul.

[v] Chrysost. in Matt. Hom. xlvi. al. xlvii. Oper. t. vii. p. 483. καθάπερ γὰρ αὕτη τὸ πολὺ ἄλευρον μεθίστησιν εἰς τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἰσχύν· οὕτω καὶ ὑμεῖς τὸν πάντα κόσμον μεταστήσετε.

[w] Sermon lxi. p. 456, Oxf. Transl.

that he has been unable to produce them. The mere unsupported assumption, that they refer to the development of doctrine in the author's sense, cannot have any weight. When a positive doctrine, so important as that of Development, is to be established, it ought not to be made dependent on merely conjectural interpretations of parables; as Jerome observes, in his commentary on one of the parables adduced above[x]; and especially when, as we shall presently see, this conjectural interpretation is inconsistent with the doctrine taught in the plainer parts of holy Scripture. That it is so, is in itself sufficient to dispose of the argument founded on these parables.

22. There is one remaining argument, which must here be noticed. "The general analogy of the world, physical and moral, confirms this conclusion[y];" for, as Bishop Butler says, "the whole natural world, and government of it, is a scheme or system; not a fixed, but a progressive one. . . . There is a plan of things beforehand laid out, which, from the nature of it, requires various systems of means, as well as length of time, in order to the carrying on its several parts into execution. Thus, in the daily course of natural providence, God operates in the very same manner as in the dispensation of Christianity, making one thing subservient to another, this to somewhat farther; and so on[z]." Mr. Newman, whose familiarity with Bishop Butler's writings

[x] After giving three interpretations of the parable of the leaven, he says of the last: "Pius quidem sensus, sed nunquam parabolæ, et dubia ænigmatum intelligentia, potest ad auctoritatem dogmatum proficere." Lib. ii. in S. Matth. Oper. t. iv. p. 57. ed. Benedict.

[y] Essay, p. 113.

[z] P. 113, 114.

cannot be questioned, ought surely to have recollected that, the argument in this place refers to the progress of God's dispensations *in general;* and not to any development of the Christian dispensation, strictly so called. It is in reply to the objection founded on the gradual and progressive character of Revelation on the whole; which is an admitted fact. But this eminent writer would never have inferred, from the admitted fact of the progress of things in the natural world, that there *must be* a corresponding progress in Revelation. He seems expressly to guard against any inference of this nature, in observing, that with regard to Revelation, "We are equally ignorant whether . . *the scheme would be revealed at once, or unfolded gradually*[a]."

This, I think, sufficiently disposes of the argument from analogy.

23. There is another argument which is put forward in several places of the Essay on Development, and which has been extensively current amongst the adherents of the author. It is this: that whatever developments have actually taken place in Christianity, were doubtless contemplated by its Divine Author, and, having been so contemplated, are to be regarded as sanctioned by His authority[b]. We read of "the general probability" "that all true developments of doctrine and usage which have been permitted . . have been Divinely approved[c]." In this passage, such sanction is limited to those developments which are "true;" but the distinction is generally overlooked; and it is assumed that the Romish developments, having been *permitted to exist*

[a] Analogy, ii. 3. [b] P. 114. [c] P. 171.

in the Church, must necessarily be approved by God, and must form parts of revelation.

The answer which occurs at once to this doctrine is, that it leads to absolute blasphemy. If God sanctions and approves all that He permits, He has sanctioned idolatry and every species of abomination under the Mosaic covenant, and He has sanctioned *sin* under the Christian covenant! They have existed; and therefore, according to this doctrine, they have been sanctioned! Nothing further need be said on this point.

But taking the doctrine in its more plausible shape,—admitting that "true" developments are sanctioned by God,—does it follow that such developments infer any growth in the comprehension of Christianity? Certainly not: "true" developments, *i. e.* developments which are probably collected from Scripture, and which do not contradict the articles of the faith, may yet be only pious opinions. Mr. Ward has referred to the doctrine of the immaculate conception of the Virgin, and the Augustinian doctrines of grace, as such opinions. In these cases there is no real growth of revelation: the idea of Christianity is not less perfectly understood at the beginning than at the end of its course.

24. We are now to consider the amount of testimony which has been brought by Mr. Newman from the records of Christian antiquity in support of his theory. I have only observed *one* quotation from any ancient writer in support of the theory under consideration. This single fact speaks volumes. The solitary quotation is from Tertullian; but there are some rather serious drawbacks even on this single testimony. "Tertullian," says Mr. Newman, "dis-

tinctly recognizes even the process of development in one of his *Montanistic* works[d];" and undoubtedly the passage produced does speak of a development, (though not a development *of doctrine;*) when in reference to an innovation upon usage, which the newly-revealed truth required, it ascribes to the Paraclete, or Holy Ghost, the office of effecting improvements: "Nothing can take place without age, and all things wait their time; . . . behold the creature itself gradually advancing to fruit." And then, after comparing this to the growth of a plant, and its production of fruit, it is added, "So too righteousness; for there is the same God both of righteousness and of the creature, and at first, in its rudiments, a nature fearing God; thence, by means of law and prophets, it advanced into infancy; thence, by the Gospel, it burst forth into its youth; and now, by the Paraclete, it is fashioned into maturity[e]." Now, omitting here the very important consideration that this theory was advanced by a *heretic*, and also that, as Mr. Newman himself admits, it has no reference to any development of "doctrine," but only of "discipline and conduct[f]," it is evident that Tertullian argued with perfect correctness from false premises. Supposing that Montanus had been the Paraclete, no one could for a moment dispute his right to develope and add to the doctrines of revelation. But then the advocates of the theory of development cannot infer with Tertullian that the process of revelation has been carried on beyond the apostolic age, because they are not prepared to maintain with him that inspiration has been carried on beyond that age.

[d] Essay, p. 350. [e] Ibid. [f] P. 349.

25. Mr. Newman has not attempted to adduce any other authorities from primitive times in support of his theory of development, nor indeed do we learn from him that any writers except De Maistre and Möhler, have expressly maintained it. One more passage, however, has been produced by Mr. Ward, which it may be well to examine. This passage is from the Commonitorium of Vincentius Lirinensis, and in it, according to Mr. Ward, the doctrine of development is distinctly put forth[g]. Mr. Newman refrains from producing this passage[h], and with some reason; for having rejected the whole theory of the writer, as insufficient to account for the phenomena of Christianity, he could not very consistently refer to him as an authority. Vincentius, having devoted the greater part of his treatise to prove that no change or innovation could be permitted in Christian doctrine, and having urged the necessity of adhering only to that doctrine which had been *always* received in the Church, proceeds to meet an *objection* which may be raised to this doctrine.

"Peradventure some will say, shall we have no *advance* in the Church of Christ? Let there be the greatest that may be. For who is he, so envious of men or hateful of God, as to labour to hinder that? But yet let it be so, that it may be really an *advance* of faith, not a *change*.... Fitting it is, therefore, that the understanding, knowledge, and wisdom of every

[g] Ward, Ideal, p. 128—130.

[h] There is an allusion to it in the Essay on Development, p. 89; but so slight, that it is evident that no weight is attached to it. This, considering the dearth of evidence from antiquity, in support of the theory of development, seems to indicate a difference of opinion between Mr. Newman and his disciple, as to the real doctrine inculcated by Vincentius.

man in particular, as well of all in common as of one alone, should, by the advance of ages, abundantly increase and go forward, but yet only in its own kind, that is to say, in *the same doctrine, the same sense, the same judgment.*" He then compares it to the growth of the body, and continues, "In like manner Christian doctrine must follow these laws of increasing; to wit, that with years it be consolidated, become more ample with time, be more exalted with continuance. . . . Lawful indeed it is, that these ancient articles of heavenly philosophy be, in process of time, trimmed, smoothed, polished . . . and albeit they receive evidence, light, distinction, they must retain their *fulness, integrity,* propriety[i]."

This passage for its fuller comprehension requires the addition of another, which Mr. Ward has only partially given: "But the Church of Christ, a diligent and careful keeper of the doctrines committed to her charge, never *changeth* any thing in them, diminisheth nothing, *addeth nothing* . . . What, in fine, was ever the object of the decrees of councils, but that what had been previously believed simply should be believed more carefully? . . . This alone did the Catholic Church accomplish by the decrees of her councils, namely, to *consign to posterity in writing what she had received from antiquity by tradition alone*[j]."

On the whole, then, the doctrine of Vincentius seems to be this, that ancient doctrines, received at all times from the beginning by all members of the Church, may be, in process of time, more accurately defined as far as expressions, and proofs, and other

[i] Vincentius Lirin. Commonitor. c. xxviii.–xxx. [j] Cap. xxxii.

accidents and forms are concerned, but that the essential ideas of Christianity always remain unaltered and without any addition. Change is to him an abomination; to the advocates of the theory of development it is an essential: "Ecclesia nihil in his unquam permutat[k]," says Vincentius; "To live is to *change*," is the doctrine of Mr. Newman, "and to be perfect is *to have changed often*[l]." It is plain that these doctrines are opposed. Whatever support the advocates of development may gather from insulated expressions in the above passages, is at once subverted by a consideration of the principle and argument of the whole treatise, which is accordingly *rejected* by the Essayist as inconsistent with the theory of development[m].

26. Having thus examined the various arguments on which the theory of development is founded, we find it impossible to avoid remarking on the very narrow basis of proof on which it has been placed. A few philosophical arguments—three parables—*one* quotation from the writings of a Montanist—constitute the whole amount of Mr. Newman's proofs! He has not produced a single clear text of Scripture, and has abandoned to his opponents the whole body of Catholic tradition in all ages. The familiarity of this learned writer with the entire range of Christian antiquity, has not enabled him to produce a scintilla of evidence in favour of his theory from any one of the Catholic Fathers or councils! We may say, as St. Athanasius said to the Arians, "Let them tell us from what teacher, or by what tradition, they have derived their notions[n]?"

[k] Cap. xxxii.
[l] Essay, p. 39.
[m] P. 7, &c.
[n] Defens. Nicen. Syn. cap. 3.

27. Let us now see what may be adduced from Scripture and Tradition in opposition to this rationalistic theory.

It may be observed, then, that the *primâ facie* view of the case is so far from leading us to the inference that Christianity must necessarily be more perfectly understood in the course of time, that it would rather conduct us to the opposite conclusion; that it has been less perfectly understood, and has been corrupted. The author of the Essay on development himself is obliged to admit this. "When we consider," he says, "the deep interest of the controversies which Christianity raises, the various minds it has swayed, the range of subjects which it embraces, the many countries it has entered, the deep philosophies it has encountered, the vicissitudes it has undergone, and the length of time through which it has lasted, it requires some assignable explanation, why we should not consider it modified and changed, that is, corrupted, from the first, by the numberless influences to which it has been exposed[o]." Such considerations certainly have no inconsiderable weight, though it seems unreasonable to maintain that there is any probability that Christianity would, "*from the first*," have been thus corrupted; to any considerable extent at least, and in material points.

The facts which this writer has brought out with reference to the actual *adoption* in Christianity, during the fifth and following centuries, of notions, and rites, and institutions derived from heathenism and heresy[p], adds much to the force of this consideration.

[o] Essay, p. 338.

[p] P. 351, 352. 359, 360.

The comparisons, too, which the advocates of the theory of development institute between Christianity and other systems, whether philosophical or religious, and the argument for progress in the one case from progress in the other, should lead *them*, at least, to the conclusion, that with development the seeds of decay have been gradually introduced, and that Christianity is, on the whole, less pure and perfect than it was at the beginning.

The mere fact of the existence of a revelation capable of being developed, does not infer any pure system of developments. The history of the Israelites sufficiently proves this. Their selection by God, and the revelation made to them by Moses and the prophets, could not even preserve the original ideas of revelation in their minds. Their whole course, till their return from the Babylonish captivity, shows that they did not always even retain the truth. In later times the Pharisees and Sadducees again corrupted it in various ways. And it may hence be argued from analogy, that the idea of Christianity would be corrupted in the course of ages, and restored by reformations analogous to those which the Jewish history presents.

So that, on the whole, the *primâ facie* view of the case is, that Christianity has probably been developed, but that the development has been in some respects a corruption; and therefore that the idea of Christianity is less clearly and perfectly comprehended than it was at the beginning.

28. We cannot, perhaps, in fairness be required to prove a negative,—to show that the notion of development, put forward by the writer in question, is without foundation in the word of God. The *onus*

*probandi* rests, of course with him; and we have seen that the evidence which has been adduced from Scripture in support of the theory is altogether inadequate.

But there is assuredly sufficient evidence in Scripture, to prove that the idea of Christianity was made fully known to the early believers—that they were put in possession of a belief which was sufficient to enable them to reject whatever heresies might arise—that the idea of Christianity was not imperfectly understood at the beginning by the Church at large.

In the first place it should be observed, that "the Spirit of truth" was promised by our Lord to His disciples, and through them to His Church, to "lead them into *all truth*[q]," to "*teach them all things*[r]," and this promise undoubtedly refers, at least, to the first ages of the Gospel. If it be claimed for later ages, it cannot be denied to the first. Hence we find the Apostle Paul professing to those whom he had instructed, that he had taught them "*all the counsel of God*[s]," and on another occasion speaking to them as enriched by Him "in all mysteries and all knowledge." So again, he contemplates the possibility of Christians understanding "all mysteries and all knowledge," and yet being without charity[t]. It is from the fulness of this instruction that he calls on the Ephesian elders to "take heed to themselves and to the flock[u]," because heresies should arise; evidently implying that they were qualified to judge false doctrine, and, therefore, that they comprehended the idea of Christianity. Hence the more

[q] John xvi. 13.
[r] John xiv. 26.
[s] Acts xx. 27.
[t] 1 Cor. xiii. 2, 3.
[u] Acts xx. 28.

perfect Christians, to whom the fulness of knowledge had been imparted, that is, the "wisdom" of which the Apostle Paul speaks, were qualified to judge: "He that is spiritual *judgeth all things*, yet he himself is judged of no man[v]."

It may, of course, be possible to devise exceptions and distinctions, by which the plain meaning of passages like these may be evaded; but I think there can be no doubt that they lead to the inference, that as the Christian doctrine was unreservedly taught by the Apostles, so it was well understood by believers, through the inward guidance of the Holy Ghost.

The doctrine thus communicated and received, was sufficient to enable Christians to reject all heresies which might arise: the apostolic exhortations always enforce the necessity of simply adhering to the faith once received, as a means of resisting false doctrines. Thus St. Paul writes to the Colossians: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him ... stablished in the faith, as ye have been taught ... Beware, lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ[w];" a passage which seems almost expressly designed to guard us against philosophical theories of development.

Thus again, the Galatians are warned, "If any man preach any other Gospel unto you, *than that ye have received*, let him be accursed[x];" and they are blamed for being led away by Judaizing brethren; evidently implying that the doctrine which they had received, *ought* to have prevented them from falling into the errors they had adopted.

[v] 1 Cor. ii. 6. [w] Col. ii. 7, 8. [x] Gal. i. 8, 9.

So again, the Apostle John, warning believers against heresies, writes thus:—"Let that therefore abide in you *which ye have heard from the beginning*... These things have I written unto you concerning them that seduce you. But the anointing which ye have received of Him, abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing *teacheth you of all things*, and is truth and no lie, and even *as it hath taught you*, ye shall abide in Him[y]."

We find the same principle in most of the Epistles. To Timothy it is said; "that thou mightest charge some that they teach *no other doctrine*," than they had received[z]. Again, "The Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter days some shall *depart from the faith*, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils[a]." He is exhorted to "put the brethren in remembrance of these things[b]," implying, that they ought to be prepared to resist the temptations of unbelievers; which could only be, by adhering to the doctrine they had learnt; and this infers their comprehension of that doctrine. To Timothy himself it is said,—"Take heed unto thyself, and to the doctrine; continue in them[c]." "O Timothy, *keep* that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science, falsely so called, which some professing, have erred concerning the faith[d]."

Amongst the qualifications of a bishop is this:—"Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine, both

[y] 1 John ii. 24—27.
[z] 1 Tim. i. 3.
[a] 1 Tim. iv. 1.
[b] 2 Tim. ii. 14.
[c] 1 Tim. iv. 16.
[d] 1 Tim. vi. 20.

to exhort, and to convince the gainsayers[e]." Surely this implies no imperfect comprehension of the idea of Christianity. It is indeed almost incredible, that the holy martyrs and confessors who conversed with the Apostles, or with those who had seen the Apostles, should be now regarded by persons professing Catholic principles as men who imperfectly comprehended Christianity. Such was not the doctrine of St. Paul, who says to the Hebrews, "Remember them which have the rule over you, who have spoken unto you the word of God; whose faith follow[f]."

St. Jude looked for no new discoveries in religion; no development of doctrine; no change or variation. His exhortation is, "that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was *once delivered to the Saints*[g]." St. John admonishes the elect lady: "This is the commandment, that as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it ... whosoever transgresseth and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God[h]." St. Peter addresses all Christians: "I stir up your pure minds by way of remembrance, that ye may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the Holy Prophets, and of the commandments of us, the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour[i]."

Now the general tendency of all these passages, (and many others of the same character will readily occur to any one versed in the sacred Scriptures,) seems very plainly to teach us that the doctrine of the Gospel was not only comprehended by the

[e] Titus i. 9.
[f] Heb. xiii. 7.
[g] Jude, 3.
[h] 2 John, 9.
[i] 2 Pet. iii. 1, 2.

Apostles and inspired teachers, but by those whom they instructed also. It may indeed be objected, that the language of Scripture is not, in all the texts which have been referred to, decisive of the question whether Christian doctrine was *perfectly* and *fully* comprehended by the early believers; that in some instances it simply attests their comprehension of Christian doctrine. But we have a right to infer, that this comprehension was full and perfect, unless it is expressly said in Scripture not to have been so: the limitation or exception must be proved by those who make it. When I say that the doctrine was "comprehended," I mean of course, only so far as it is possible for human comprehension to reach in this present life; nor is it intended to deny that amongst believers there have been at all times various degrees of knowledge, as the Apostle intimates in his first Epistle to the Corinthians. "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able[j]." So also in the Epistle to the Hebrews: "When for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again, which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat[k]." But in this last case, he proceeds to instruct them in higher things: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection[l];" as he had taught the Corinthians also: "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect[m]."

[j] 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2.
[k] Heb. v. 12.
[l] Heb. vi. 1.
[m] 1 Cor. ii. 6.

It was the custom of the Apostles not to communicate at once the whole doctrine of the Gospel. Thus St. Paul writes to the Thessalonians: "What thanks can we render to God again for you, for all the joy wherewith we joy for your sakes before our God; night and day praying exceedingly, that we might see your face, and *might perfect that which is lacking in your faith*[n]*?*" This last passage seems to furnish a decisive proof of the fulness and perfection of the faith of the primitive Church. Taken simply and literally, it seems to establish all that we contend for.

On the whole, then, we seem to be fully borne out by the language of Scripture in maintaining against the advocates of the theory of development, that in the Church at large from the beginning, *i. e.* from the time when the Apostles themselves were fully enlightened by the Holy Spirit, the creed of believers in general was uniform and complete, and without any "gaps;" that as there was "one Lord" so was there "one faith[o]" which prevailed in the Catholic Church amongst all nations of the earth; that the Catholic Church of Christ was ignorant of no article of revealed truth; that its belief was not unsettled, wavering, imperfect, or mingled with impure ingredients even from the beginning; but that as the Christian dispensation was introduced by the Son of God, and confirmed by the power of the Holy Ghost, in order that men might know "the truth," and that "the truth might make them free[p]," so it is certain that it did not fail in its effect, but that "*the truth*" *was* received and comprehended in its "length, and

[n] 1 Thess. iii. 9, 10. [o] Ephes. iv. 5. [p] John viii. 32.

breadth, and depth, and height," according to the measure of human capacity, and men were "filled with all the fulness of God[q]."

29. And such has been invariably the belief of the Catholic Church, even from the beginning. It may seem useless indeed to produce testimonies from the Fathers, because those with whom we have to do, appear to be prejudiced against any such testimonies by their theory, that Christianity was imperfectly comprehended, even in its principles, in the early ages[r]. But still the unanimous voice of the whole Christian Church cannot easily be set aside: it will evince, at least, the harmony of all ages in this one testimony. We need not seek for an "anticipation" or two of this doctrine here and there, amongst heretics, as our opponents are compelled to do, in order to show that their "theory of development" is not the offspring of the rationalism of the *nineteenth* century. We appeal to the whole body of Christian writers, of Fathers, of councils, of schoolmen, of modern theologians, in all sects and communions, except those which are decidedly rationalistic. We appeal finally to the prevalent doctrine of the Roman Church itself. We affirm, that throughout the whole of Christianity in all ages, there is one unanimous voice in opposition to "the theory of development."

Let us begin with the testimony of Vincentius Lirinensis, which, although it is acknowledged by Mr. Newman to be opposed to the theory of deve-

[q] Ephes. iii. 19.

[r] "So far, however, may be granted to M. Guizot, that even principles were not so well understood and so carefully handled at first, as they were afterwards." Essay on Development, p. 349.

lopment, is, nevertheless, the clear and definite testimony of a writer of the fifth century.

"To announce any thing to Catholic Christians, except that which they have received," says Vincentius of Lerins, "never was, never is, never will be lawful; to anathematize those who announce somewhat beside what has been once received, never was, never is, never will be unnecessary[s]." "'O Timothy,' saith he, 'keep the deposit, avoiding profane babblings.' . . . What is the 'deposit?' what is entrusted to thee, *not what is invented by thee:* what thou hast received, *not what thou hast excogitated:* a matter, not of wit, but of learning; not of private choice, but of public tradition: *a thing brought to thee, not proceeding from thee*, in which thou art not to be an author, but a keeper; not a teacher, but a disciple; not a leader, but a follower. 'Keep the deposit, he saith, preserve the talent of the Catholic faith, inviolate and undefiled[t].'" And the office of the Church, as regards the development of Christian doctrine, is simply this: "The Church of Christ, a diligent and careful keeper of the doctrines deposited with her, *never changes* aught in them, diminishes nothing, *adds nothing*, doth not retrench what is necessary, or annex what is superfluous, neither loses her own, nor taketh what pertains to others, but sedulously applies herself only to this, in the faithful and wise handling of ancient doctrines, to give care and polish to what may have been anciently without order, and unfinished; to consolidate and strengthen what has been brought out and declared; and to guard what has been confirmed and defined. What,

[s] Vincentius Lirin. Commonitor. cap. xiv. [t] Cap. xxvii.

in fine, was ever the object of the decrees of councils, but that what had been previously believed simply, should be more carefully believed . . . This alone did the Catholic Church accomplish by the decree of her councils, namely, *to consign to posterity in writing what she had received from antiquity by tradition alone*[u]."

Mr. Newman admits that the principle (or "theory" as he calls it) of this writer is opposed to the doctrine of development. "Such," he says, "is the rule of historical interpretation which has been professed in the English school of divines[v];" and which he rejects. Vincentius Lirinensis then is abandoned to us. This is not an unimportant concession; for if any thing be certain, it is this, that Vincentius taught substantially the same doctrine which all the Fathers and Councils maintained.

30. We learn from Eusebius that the martyr Ignatius, who had been constituted Bishop of Antioch by the Apostles, "encouraged the faithful to adhere firmly to the tradition of the Apostles[w]." Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, who conversed with St. John the Evangelist, according to the testimony of Irenæus, "ever taught that which he had learned from the Apostles, which the Church has delivered, and which alone is true[x]." Irenæus testifies the continuance of the apostolic doctrine in its unity and perfection in the Church universal: "the world's languages are various," he says, "but the power of tradition is one and the same. There is no difference of faith or tradi-

[u] Cap. xxxii.

[v] Essay on Development, p. 8.

[w] Euseb. Hist. Eccl. lib. iii. c. 36.

[x] Irenæus, adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 3. ταῦτα διδάξας ἀεὶ, ἃ καὶ παρὰ τῶν ἀποστόλων ἔμαθεν, ἃ καὶ ἡ ἐκκλησία παραδίδωσιν, ἃ καὶ μόνα ἐστὶν ἀληθῆ.

tion, whether in the Churches of Germany or of Spain, &c.; . . . but as the sun, God's creature, is one and the same in all the world, so also the preaching of the truth shines every where, and lighteneth every one, who will come to the knowledge of the truth. Among the rulers of the Church, neither He, who is all-powerful in word, speaketh other doctrine (for no one can be above his master), nor does the weak in word diminish the tradition[y]." And in another place: "the truth is not to be sought elsewhere than in the Church, since the Apostles most fully bestowed on it, as a rich depository, *all the things* which are of the truth, in order that every one who desires it, may thence receive the draught of life. For this is the way to life[z]."

Tertullian teaches the same doctrine when he declares that "the rule of faith is altogether one, sole, unalterable, unchangeable[a]." "We have the Apostles of our Lord for founders, who were not themselves the inventors nor authors of what they have left us, but they have faithfully taught the world the doctrine which they received from Christ[b]."

[y] Adv. Hæres. lib. i. c. 10. *καὶ γὰρ αἱ κατὰ τὸν κόσμον διάλεκτοι ἀνόμοιοι, ἀλλ' ἡ δύναμις τῆς παραδόσεως μία καὶ ἡ αὐτη . .* l. v. c. 20: "Ecclesiæ quidem prædicatio vera et firma, apud quam una et eadem salutis via in universo mundo ostenditur. Hinc enim creditum est lumen Dei, et propter hoc sapientia Dei, per quam salvat omnes homines, in exitu canitur."

[z] Adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 4. "Non oportet adhuc quærere apud alios veritatem, quam facile est ab ecclesia sumere; cum Apostoli, quasi in depositorium dives, plenissime in eam contulerint omnia quæ sint veritatis; uti omnis quicumque velit, sumat ex ea potum vitæ."

[a] Tertull. de Veland. Virg. c. i. "Regula quidem fidei una omnino est, sola, immobilis, et irreformabilis . . . hac lege fidei manente, cætera jam disciplinæ et conversationis admittunt novitatem correctionis."

[b] De Præscript. adv. Hær. c. vi. "Apostolos Domini habemus autores, qui nec ipsi quicquam ex suo arbitrio, quod

. . . "What the Apostles preached, that is, what Christ revealed to them, I will here rule, must be proved in no other way than by *those same Churches* which the Apostles themselves founded; themselves, I say, by preaching to them as well *vivâ voce* (as men say), as afterwards by Epistles[c] . . . If, therefore, it is not to be believed either that the Apostles were ignorant of the fulness of the doctrine, or that they did not make known to all *the whole order of the rule of faith*, let us see whether perchance the Apostles taught it simply and *fully*, but the Churches, through their own fault, received it otherwise than the Apostles set it forth. All these incentives to curious doubt, thou mayest find put forward by the heretics. They remember that the Churches were rebuked by the Apostles [referring to Gal. iii. 1, v. 7, i. 6; 1 Cor. iii. 1, 2, viii. 2]. When they object to us that the Churches were reproved, let them believe that they were amended; and let them also remember those concerning whose 'faith,' and 'knowledge,' and conversation the Apostle 'rejoiceth,' and 'giveth God thanks,' [referring to Rom. i. 8, xv. 14, xvi. 19; Eph. i. 15; Phil. i. 3—6; Col. i. 4—8; 1 Thess. i. 3. 5—10; 2 Thess. i. 3, 4,] which nevertheless at this day join with those which are reproved, in the privileges of one instituted body."

"Well then, be it that all have erred; that the Apostle also was deceived in the testimony he gave in favour of some; that the Holy Spirit had regard

inducerent, elegerunt: sed acceptam a Christo disciplinam fideliter nationibus adsignaverunt."

[c] De Præscript. c. xxi. "Quid autem prædicaverint, id est quid illis Christus revelaverit: et hic præscribam, non aliter probari debere, nisi per easdem ecclesias, quas ipsi Apostoli condiderunt."

to no one of them so as to 'guide' it 'into truth,' although for this sent by Christ, asked of the Father, that He might be the teacher of truth; that He, the steward of God, the deputy of Christ, neglected His office, suffering the Churches the while to understand differently, to believe differently, that which He Himself preached by the Apostles; is it probable, that so many Churches, and so great, should have gone astray into the same faith? Never is there one result among many chances: the error in the doctrine of the Churches must needs have *varied.* But where one and the same thing is found amongst many, this is not error, but *tradition*[d]."

The doctrine of this writer evidently is, that the Church received one faith from the Apostles—that it was fully instructed in the Christian doctrine—that this doctrine was irreformable and unchangeable. The Essayist himself admits that Tertullian is not favourable to the theory of "development[e]."

"Nor was this the doctrine and practice of one school only, which might be ignorant of philosophy: the cultivated minds of the Alexandrian Fathers, who are said to owe so much to pagan science, certainly showed no gratitude or reverence towards their alleged instructress, but maintained the supremacy of Catholic tradition. Clement[f] speaks of heretical teachers as perverting Scripture, and essaying the gate of heaven with a false key; not raising the veil, as he and his, by means of tradition from Christ, but digging through the Church's wall, and

[d] Tertull. de Præscript. c. xxvii. xxviii.

[e] "Tertullian asserted with exaggeration the immutability of the Creed." Essay on Development, p. 349.

[f] Stromat. lib. vii. ed. Potter, p. 897.

becoming mystagogues of unbelief; 'for,' he continues, 'few words are enough to prove that they have formed their human assemblies later than the Catholic Church;' and 'from that previously existing and most true Church, it is very clear, that these later heresies and others which have been since, are counterfeit and novel inventions[g].'"

In another place Clement describes true doctrine as that which is derived by tradition from the Apostles. Speaking of certain teachers, he says, "They who preserved the true tradition of blessed doctrine directly from the holy Apostles Peter, and James, and John, and Paul, as a son receives it from a father .... have come to us, by God's will, to deposit their ancient and apostolic seeds[h]." And again, speaking of the presumption of heretics who taught doctrines differing from those of the Apostles and ancient teachers, he says: "For what, among men so mighty in ecclesiastical knowledge, was left for Marcion, Prodicus, or such like, who entered not the right way? *In wisdom they did not surpass their predecessors, so as to discover any thing in addition to what they had truly spoken.* It would indeed have been well for them could they have acquired what had been before delivered[i]."

Such doctrines as these are wholly inconsistent with the notion of the development of new articles

[g] P. 899. See Newman, Essay, p. 342.

[h] Stromat. lib. i. p. 322. ed. Potter. ἀλλ' οἱ μὲν τὴν ἀληθῆ τῆς μακαρίας σώζοντες διδασκαλίας παράδοσιν, εὐθὺς ἀπὸ Πέτρου τε καὶ Ἰακώβου, Ἰωάννου τε καὶ Παύλου, τῶν ἁγίων ἀποστόλων, παῖς παρὰ πατρὸς ἐκδεχόμενος .. ἦκον δὴ σὺν Θεῷ καὶ εἰς ἡμᾶς, τὰ προγονικὰ ἐκεῖνα καὶ Ἀποστολικὰ καταθησόμενοι σπέρματα.

[i] Stromat. lib. vii. p. 896. ed. Potter. οὐ γὰρ ἂν ὑπερέβαλον σοφίᾳ τοὺς ἔμπροσθεν ἄνδρας, ὡς προσεξευρεῖν τι τοῖς ὑπ' ἐκείνων ἀληθῶς ῥηθεῖσιν.

of faith in Christianity beyond those which had been received from the beginning. We thus find, even in the philosophic Clement, the very same principle of immutability of creed which is taught by Tertullian and by Vincentius Lirinensis.

We may refer to the martyr Hippolytus for further proof; "Let us believe, therefore, brethren, according to the tradition of the Apostles[j]:" to the martyr Cyprian; "If in any thing the truth shall seem to fail and waver, let us return to the original of the Lord, and to the traditions of the Gospel and of the Apostles, and thence let our practice have its rise, whence our rule, and order, and beginning came[k]:" "It is easy to minds that are religious and simple to lay aside error, and to discover truth; for if we turn to the source and head of Divine traditions, error ceases[l]:" to the martyr Stephen, Bishop of Rome; "Let no innovation be introduced, but let that be observed which is handed down to us by tradition[m]."

"When the Marcionites, Valentinians, and the like," says Origen, "appeal to apocryphal works, they are saying, 'Christ is in the desert;' when to canonical Scripture, 'Lo, He is in the chambers;' but we must not depart from that first and ecclesiastical tradition, nor believe otherwise than *as the Churches of God by succession have transmitted to us*[n]." In another place he says, "As there are many who think they believe what Christ taught, and some of these differ from others . . . that truth alone

[j] Hippolytus, Contra Noetum, p. 243, ed. Fabricii.

[k] Cyprian, Epist. 74. ad Pompeium.

[l] P. 141, ibid.

[m] Vincent. Lirin. Commonitor. c. vi.

[n] Origen, Tract. xxix. in Matth. See Newman, Essay, p. 343.

is to be believed, which differs in no respect from the Ecclesiastical and Apostolical tradition [o]."

"The Fathers of Asia Minor, who excommunicated Noëtus, rehearse the Creed, and add, 'We declare *as we have learned;*' the Fathers of Antioch, who deposed Paul of Samosata, set down in writing the Creed from Scripture, 'which,' they say, '*we received from the beginning*, and have by tradition and in custody, in the Catholic and Holy Church, until this day, by succession, as preached by the blessed Apostles, who were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word [p].'"

It was on this principle, also, that Irenæus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Firmilian, Cyprian, Eusebius, Athanasius, Pacian, Epiphanius, argued, when they contended that heretical doctrines, as being of *later date* than the orthodox belief, cannot be true. The original belief of the Church was supposed to be free from error, doubtfulness, or imperfection.

Athanasius supplies abundant evidence of the belief of the Church in the fulness and perfection of the faith which had been received from the beginning. In answer to the Arians, who pretended that the expressions of the Nicene Creed had been invented by the Council of Nice, he says: "That they did not invent them for themselves . . . but spoke what they had received from their predecessors, pro-

[o] Origen, de Principiis, lib. i. præf. Oper. t. i. p. 47. "Cum multi sint qui se putant sentire quæ Christi sunt, et nonnulli eorum diversa a prioribus sentiant, servetur vero ecclesiastica prædicatio per successionis ordinem ab Apostolis tradita, et usque ad præsens in ecclesiis permanens: illa sola credenda est veritas, quæ in nullo ab ecclesiastica et apostolica discordat traditione."

[p] Newman, Essay, p. 343.

ceed we to prove this also, to cut off even this excuse from them." Then, after quoting several of the more ancient Christian writers, he continues: "See, we are proving that this view has been transmitted from father to father; but ye, O modern Jews and disciples of Caiaphas, how many Fathers can ye assign to your phrases? Not one of the understanding and wise; for all abhor you, but the devil alone ... who now persuades you to slander the œcumenical Council, for committing to writing, not your doctrines, but that which *from the beginning* those who were eye-witnesses and ministers of the Word have handed down to us[q]."

Mr. Newman has very justly remarked on the above passage, that "the profession under which the decrees of councils come to us is, that of setting forth in writing what has *ever* been held orally or implicitly in the Church. Hence the frequent use of such phrases as ἐγγραφῶς ἐξετέθη with reference to them. Thus Damasus (Theod. Hist. v. 10) speaks of that 'apostolical faith, which was *set forth in writing* by the Fathers in Nicæa[r].'"

But to return to Athanasius. His language is always uniform on this subject. "If," he says, "the Arians allow that these things are now heard for the first time, let them not deny that this heresy is something foreign, and *not received from the Fathers.* But what is not received from the Fathers, but has been *now discovered*, what can it be but that of which the blessed Paul said, 'In the last times some shall depart from the sound faith, giving heed to

[q] Athanas. de Decretis Nicænæ Synod. Oper. t. i. p. 233, ed. Benedict.

[r] Library of the Fathers, vol. viii. p. 49.

spirits of error and doctrines of devils[s]?" Elsewhere he says, in reference to the doctrine of the Divinity of the Holy Spirit, that we should "look to the same doctrine, and teaching, and faith, which was from the beginning of the Catholic Church, which the Lord taught, the Apostles preached, and *the Fathers preserved.* On this the Church is founded, and whoever departs from it, cannot be or be called a Christian[t]." Elsewhere he says: "Our faith is correct, coming to us from the teaching of the Apostles and the tradition of the Fathers[u]."

Athanasius also assures us that this principle was that of the 318 Fathers of the first œcumenical synod at Nicæa. "Concerning Easter, because it was ordained that all should obey, they said, 'The following has been ordained.' But, concerning faith, they did not say 'it has been ordained,' but 'so the Catholic Church believes;' to which was immediately added the confession of faith, that they might show that their doctrine was not new, but apostolic; and that what they committed to writing had not been discovered by themselves, but was the very doctrine which the Apostles had taught[v]."

Nor was this the principle of the orthodox only in those ages; even those who were of less settled faith than Athanasius, and who did not at first receive the ὁμοούσιον, professed that Christian doctrine was derived from the Apostles by tradition in the Universal Church. Thus Eusebius says, in speaking

[s] Orat. i. contra Arianos, t. i. p. 412. τὸ δὲ μὴ ἐκ πατέρων, ἀλλὰ νῦν ἐφευρεθὲν, τί ἂν εἴη ἕτερον ἢ περὶ οὗ προείρηκεν ὁ μακάριος Παῦλος; κ.τ.λ.

[t] Epist. i. ad Serapionem. Oper. tom. i. pars ii. p. 676.

[u] Ad Adelph. Oper. tom. ii. p. 914.

[v] Athanas. Epist. de Synod. Oper. t. i. pars ii. p. 719.

on the doctrine of the Trinity, "To what he has mentioned, I will add a discourse on the Divinity of our Saviour, having nothing new, or of myself, to say. . . . I shall deliver the uncorrupted doctrine of *the Church of God*, which she received at the beginning from eye and ear witnesses, and still preserves[w]." Cyril of Jerusalem, who was for a time connected with the semi-Arian party, says, "The Church is called Catholic . . . because she teaches universally and *without defect*, all the doctrines which ought to be known of man, concerning visible and invisible, heavenly and earthly things[x]." Nay, the Arians themselves in their synods of Jerusalem and Antioch professed to adhere to "the apostolical tradition and teaching," and not to "receive any other faith beside that which has been handed down from the beginning." And, to take a writer of wholly opposite opinions, who even separated from the Church on account of its lenity towards those who had yielded in the Arian controversy, Lucifer, Bishop of Calaris, condemns the heretics of his day, because "they forsook the faith which the Patriarchs, Prophets, Apostles, *and Martyrs* had maintained," and speaks to them thus: "How could we Christians acquiesce with you, a disciple of Arius, and *desert* the apostolical tradition[y]?"

[w] Euseb. de Eccl. Theol. contra Marcellum, p. 60, ed. Colon. 1688. *συνάψω δὲ κατὰ τὸ αὐτὸ . . τὴν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν θεολογίαν, νεώτερον μὲν λέγειν ἔχων οὐδὲν οὐδ' ἐμαυτοῦ σοφόν τι καὶ οἰκεῖον εὕρημα, τῆς δὲ ἐκκλησίας τοῦ Θεοῦ τὴν ἀδιάφθορον διδασκαλίαν προϊσχόμενος, ἣν παρὰ τῶν αὐτοπτῶν καὶ αὐτηκόων τοῦ λόγου, ἄνωθεν ἐξ ἀρχῆς παραλαβοῦσα, φυλάττει.*

[x] Cyril. Hierosol. Catechesis. xviii. 11. *διὰ τὸ διδάσκειν καθολικῶς καὶ ἀνελλειπῶς, ἅπαντα τὰ εἰς γνῶσιν ἀνθρώπων ἐλθεῖν ὀφείλοντα δόγματα.*

[y] Lucifer, de non Conven. cum Hæreticis, Gallandii Biblioth. Patr. tom. vi. p. 214.

Even the Valentinians pretended that their doctrines had been derived from the Apostles by a secret tradition[z]. Marcellus of Ancyra asserted that his doctrine had been the universal belief of Christians till the time of Origen. The Artemonites contended that their tenets had been received in the Church till the time of Pope Zephyrinus, the successor of Victor.

We must now revert to the testimonies of the Fathers. Epiphanius writes thus: "We have boundaries and foundations, and building up of faith, and the traditions of the Apostles, and the Holy Scriptures, and successions of doctrine; and the truth of God is secured on all sides, and let no one be deceived by new fables[a]." "Which is the best informed—a deceived man who hath just appeared and is now living; or those who were witnesses before us, having before us, in the Church, the tradition which they had received from their fathers, as those fathers again had learnt it from their predecessors, as the Church continues to the present day to hold the true faith and traditions which *she received from her fathers*[b]*?*"

"Exscissi igitur estis cuncti blasphemi . . . quia non fueritis in ea manentes fide, in qua manserint Patriarchæ, Prophetæ, Apostoli, ac Martyres."

[z] This notion of a secret tradition limited to certain persons, which was rejected by Irenæus (adv. Hæres. lib. iii. c. 3) and by Tertullian (de Præscript. c. xxii.), was held by Clement of Alexandria (Stromat. l. i. p. 322) and by Origen (see Gieseler, Church Hist. i. 137). It was, however, still supposed to be derived *from the Apostles.*

[a] Epiphan. Hæres. xxxv. al. lv. Melchisedech. Oper. t. i. p. 471. ed. Petavii. *καὶ ὅροι γὰρ ἐτέθησαν ἡμῖν, καὶ θεμέλιοι, καὶ οἰκοδομὴ τῆς πίστεως, καὶ Ἀποστόλων παραδόσεις, καὶ γραφαὶ ἅγιαι, καὶ διαδοχαὶ διδασκαλίας, καὶ ἐκ πανταχόθεν ἡ ἀλήθεια τοῦ Θεοῦ ἠσφάλισται. καὶ μηδεὶς ἀπατάσθω καινοῖς μύθοις.*

[b] Epiphan. Hæres. lv. al. lxxv. Oper. t. i. p. 910.

The doctrine of Basil is equally decisive: "It befits him who has before his eyes the judgment of Christ, and knows how dangerous it is to take from, or to add to those things, which have been delivered by the Spirit, not to be ambitious of new expositions of his own, but quietly to rest in the things which have been before declared by the Saints. Wherefore, to venture upon any thing which neither common custom nor the use of the Scriptures admits, is it not the height of madness[c]?" To the heretic, Eunomius, he writes thus: "What say you? shall we not attribute more authority to antiquity? Are not the multitude of Christians who now are, as well as those who went before us . . . to be respected? Must we disregard the worthiness of those who were resplendent in all kinds of spiritual gifts? . . . Shall we wholly shut the eyes of our souls, and, suppressing the recollection of every holy man, submit our understandings to your deceits and idle sophistries? Truly your authority would be great, if we should concede to your dictation, what the devil could not effect by his various wiles; if, persuaded by you, we should prefer your impious inventions to that tradition which, *in all former times*, was held by so many holy men[d]." Again, in reference to another heresy, he says, "Separate not the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son: let tradition deter you. For so the Lord taught, the Apostles preached, the Fathers maintained, the Martyrs confirmed. Be satisfied to speak as you were instructed[e]." "It is," he says, "the

[c] Basil, adv. Eunom. lib. ii. c. 8. Oper. t. i. p. 243, ed. Benedict.

[d] Adv. Eunom. lib. i. Oper. tom. i. p. 210, 211.

[e] Hom. xxiv. cont. Sabell. t. ii. p. 194. *δυσωπείτω σε ἡ παράδοσις· ὁ Κύριος οὕτως ἐδίδαξεν, ἀπόστολοι ἐκήρυξαν, πατέρες διετήρησαν, μάρτυρες ἐβε-*

common aim of all the opponents and enemies of sound doctrine, to shake the solidity of our faith in Christ, by annulling apostolical tradition[f]."

Thus, again, Gregory Nazianzen, another champion of orthodoxy, wishes that "to the last breath of life, the good deposit of the holy Fathers who were nearest to Christ, should be confessed with boldness, and the confession of the original faith, in which we were nurtured, be maintained[g]." And elsewhere he speaks of the doctrine which he had heard from the sacred oracles, and been taught by the holy Fathers. "Which I have taught at all times in the same way, not conforming myself to the times, and will not cease to teach; with which I was born and with which I shall depart[h]." Gregory Nyssen, the brother of Basil, holds that "it is sufficient for a demonstration of our words, to have a tradition coming down by succession from the Apostles, as an inheritance, through the Saints who have followed them[i]."

Antiquity was ever the note of truth in the Catholic Church. Thus the Fathers of the Second œcumenical Synod, in their synodical epistle to the bishops of the West, speak thus of the Nicene faith: "which ought to be approved as most *ancient*, and accordant with baptism[j];" and the Emperor Theodosius, who convened this synod, called together the heads of

*βαίωσαν· ἀρκέσθητι λέγειν ὡς ἐδιδάχθης.*

[f] De Spiritu Sancto, c. x. t. iii. p. 21.

[g] Gregor. Nazianzen. Orat. vi. Oper. t. i. ed. Morell. p. 141. *καὶ ὁμολογοίημεν μέχρι τῆς ἐσχάτης ἀναπνοῆς ἐν πολλῇ παῤῥησίᾳ, τὴν καλὴν παρακαταθήκην τῶν ἁγίων πατέρων τῶν ἐγγυτέρω Χριστοῦ, καὶ τῆς πρώτης πίστεως . . . ὁμολογίαν.*

[h] Gregor. Naz. Orat. xxv. p. 440. Oper. tom. i.

[i] Greg. Nyss. Orat. iii. cont. Eunom. p. 554. Oper. tom. i.

[j] Concil. Labbe, t. ii. p. 964.

the Arians, Eunomians, and Macedonians, by the advice of Nectarius, Bishop of Constantinople, and inquired of them whether they were of opinion that the Fathers who governed the Church before the divisions, agreed in sound doctrine; and on their admitting it, he proposed that the doctrines of these sects should be judged by the writings of those Fathers[k].

This was also the principle of the Third œcumenical Synod, in which the controversy was decided by reference to the testimony of antiquity as to the faith of the Church. Vincentius of Lerins adduces the proceedings of this synod in confirmation of the principle of his treatise. "In order," he says, "that we may not seem to draw rather from our own opinions than from ecclesiastical authority, we have adduced the example of the holy council, which almost three years since was celebrated at Ephesus in Asia, where, when the question was concerning the determination of the rules of faith .... it seemed most Catholic, most consistent with faith and with propriety, to all the bishops assembled there, to the number of 200, that the sentiments of the holy Fathers should be produced, of whom some had been martyrs, others confessors, and all had continued to be Catholic bishops, in order that by their consent and decree the ancient doctrine of religion might be duly and solemnly confirmed. Which being done, that impious Nestorius was adjudged to be contrary to Catholic antiquity, and the blessed Cyril conformable to antiquity." After mentioning the names of the Fathers whose writings had been quoted in the Council of

[k] Socrates, Hist. Eccl. lib. vi. c. 10; Soz. lib. vii. c. 12.

Ephesus, Vincentius proceeds thus: "These all, therefore, were produced at Ephesus, as masters, counsellors, witnesses, and judges, whose doctrine that blessed synod holding, following their counsel, believing their testimony, obedient to their judgment, without delay, presumption, and favour, decided concerning the rules of faith. . . . After all which, we have added the doctrine of the blessed Cyril which is contained in the ecclesiastical acts. For when the epistle of the holy Capreolus, Bishop of Carthage, was read, which urged and requested nothing else except that novelty might be repressed and antiquity defended, the Bishop Cyril thus spoke and decreed that which it seems not unadvisable to insert in this place. For he saith at the conclusion of the acts: 'And be this epistle of the venerable and very religious Capreolus, Bishop of Carthage, inserted in the acts, the purpose of which is manifest. For he desires the doctrines of the ancient faith to be confirmed, and novel and superfluous inventions, impiously made public, to be rejected and condemned.' And all the bishops exclaimed: 'These are the words of us all: We all say this: This is the desire of us all.' What were 'the words of all,' or what 'the wishes of all,' but that what had been anciently delivered might be retained, and what had been lately invented might be rejected[1]?"

Pope Celestine, in writing to the synod of Ephesus on the subject of their deliberations, declared that it was the duty of the successors of the Apostles to execute the command which they had received, "by concurrent exertion, to uphold what had been en-

[1] Vincent. Lirin. Commonitor. II.

trusted and maintained to the present time by apostolical succession[m]." So again, Cyril of Alexandria says, in reference to those who fall into erroneous doctrine, "Though the human mind sometimes from self-love depart from the right way and from true doctrines .... yet it will easily reform itself, if it will but examine the labours of the holy fathers whom all esteem for the rectitude and accuracy of their opinions[n]." Pope Sixtus teaches the same doctrine: "Since faith, as the Apostle says, is one, ... there is no further room for novelty, because *nothing should be added to antiquity*. The pure and plain belief of our ancestors must be troubled by no base admixture[o]."

And this brings us to the Fourth œcumenical Synod of Chalcedon, in which the same belief prevailed as we have seen in the preceding councils and Fathers, that the Catholic faith in its integrity had been communicated to the Universal Church by the apostles, and always taught by their successors. When the Epistle of Pope Leo to Flavianus on the doctrine of the Incarnation, and several extracts from the writings of the ancient Fathers in confirmation of the same doctrine, had been read, all

[m] Concilia, Labbe, t. iii. p. 614. "Ad omnes in commune Domini sacerdotes mandatæ prædicationis cura pervenit: hæreditario in hanc solicitudinem jure constringimur ... agendum igitur est labore communi, ut credita, et per apostolicam successionem hucusque detenta, servemus."

[n] Cyril. Alex. Apol. adv. Oriental. Anathem. Opera, t. vi. p. 177.

[o] Epist. ad Joan. Antioch. Concilia, Labbe, t. iii. p. 1262. "Ergo quia una (sicut dicit Apostolus) fides est, et vincentes obtinuit, dicenda credamus, et tenenda dicamus; nihil ultra liceat novitati, quia nihil adjici convenit vetustati; dilucida et perspicua majorum credulitas nulla cœni permixtione turbetur." Labbe remarks that the *Commonitorium* of Vincentius is actually cited in this passage.

the bishops exclaimed, "This is the faith of the Fathers. This is the faith of the apostles. We all believe so. The orthodox believe so. Anathema to those who do not believe so[p]." In their address to the Emperor Marcian, the Council declared that they had followed their predecessors, in refuting errors without any innovation in doctrine; and they fortified their decision by a list of extracts from the writings of the ancient Fathers[q].

Pope Leo, on many occasions, upheld the same principle. Thus he writes to Proterius, Bishop of Alexandria: "The clergy, and people, and all the brethren should be so exhorted by your diligence to increase in faith, that you should show them that you teach nothing new, but instil into their minds what our venerable fathers unanimously taught; with whom our epistle agrees in all respects. Moreover, this should be pointed out, not merely in their own words, but by reciting the expositions of those who went before, in order that the people of God may understand that they now hear, what had been received by those Fathers from their predecessors, and delivered by them to their successors[r]." And his notion of the Catholic faith excludes variation or change: "Entire faith, true faith, is a great defence, in which nothing can be added by any one, nor taken away; for unless it be one, it is not faith, for the Apostle saith, 'One Lord, one faith, one baptism.' To this unity, beloved, adhere with unshaken minds[s]."

[p] Concilia, Labbe, t. iv. p. 368.
[q] Ibid. t. iv. p. 820—832.
[r] Leo, Epist. cxxix. Oper. t. i. p. 1254, 1255, ed. Venet. 1753.
[s] Serm. iv. in Nativ. Dom. Oper. t. i. p. 82.

In the fifth and sixth œcumenical synods the same principle prevailed. In the former, the bishops declared in their synodical decree, that they adhered to the doctrine of the holy Fathers[t]; in the latter, the Monothelites were refuted by the testimony of Christian antiquity[u].

The second Nicene Synod under Irene, professed to base its decree in favour of the worship of images on the doctrine of the holy Fathers[v]. The Council of Constantinople in 869, under Ignatius, decreed that the doctrine of the Fathers and tradition should be observed[w]. Such was the universal doctrine of the succeeding councils and Fathers. Even the scholastic theology was wholly based on tradition. The "Book of Sentences," of Peter Lombard, on which the schoolmen commented, decided all questions by testimonies from the ancient Christian writers.

In the East the conference between the Greeks and Armenians, held in 1170 with a view to the termination of religious differences, turned entirely on the interpretation of the language of the ancient Fathers[x]. The conferences between the Greeks and Latins in the Synod of Florence (A. D. 1438), consisted chiefly in discussions as to the doctrines of Christian antiquity[y].

Thus the essential principle of Vincentius, which supposes the early tradition of the Catholic Church to have been founded on a full comprehension of the apostolical doctrine, was always received in the Universal Church, and even amongst schismatics and

[t] Concilia, Harduin, t. iii. p. 188—202; Fleury, Hist. Eccl. liv. xxxiii. sect. 50.

[u] Fleury, Hist. Eccl. l. xl. § 13, &c.

[v] Ibid. l. xliv. § 34.

[w] Harduin. tom. v.

[x] Fleury, l. lxii. § 19.

[y] Ibid. l. cviii.

heretics, up to the period of the Reformation. And the same principle has ever since prevailed in the Oriental Churches; in the Roman communion; in the Anglo-Catholic Churches; and in the societies of the Foreign Reformation.

31. A modern writer of the Roman obedience, has produced evidence of the general approbation with which the doctrine of Vincentius has been received in all ages. "Gennadius," he says, "entitles it 'a most powerful argument against heretics.' It is commended by Trithemius as 'an admirable work, greatly commended by the ancient doctors.' Baronius and Possevinus entitle it *libellum plane aureum.* Bellarmine (de Script. Eccl.) calls it *volumen parvum mole, virtute maximum.*" He also cites the testimonies of other writers of the Roman communion, as Saussæus, Antelmius, Coster, Falsac, Pithou, Baluze, Salinas, Andre, who have spoken in the highest commendation of the principle and doctrine of Vincentius[z].

Melchior Canus, one of the most renowned theologians of the Church of Rome, has observed[a], that "Tradition is recommended by its age; and if any novelty is heard in the Church, it may be known to be contrary to antiquity and to the apostolical faith;"—that "nothing is so contrary to the ancient doctrines delivered by the apostles as new or profane opinions in the Church;" which, he says, "shall be confirmed by the authority of Vincentius Lirinensis, who is of great weight." This writer accordingly cites from Vincentius the same passage which has

[z] Klüpfel, Commonitor. Vincentii Lirin. Prolegomena, p. 34, 35, Viennæ, 1809.

[a] Melchior Canus, de locis Theologicis, lib. iii. cap. 7.

been quoted above; and thus testifies his agreement with the doctrine, that the true Catholic faith has been handed down by succession from the apostles in the Universal Church, and that no part of it has been invented by man. Tournely, another theologian of the highest eminence and authority, also adopts the rule of Vincentius. "How," he says, "does the Church defend and confirm the truth of her doctrine against heretics? By the Word of God, of which she is the faithful keeper; by the firm and constant consent of the apostolic churches, which she consults and follows, in retaining one and the same faith. *In ipsâ etenim Catholicâ ecclesiâ magnopere curandum est, ut id teneamus, quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus creditum est*[b]."

In the next chapter it will be shown, that the Roman Church generally has always recognized the transmission of the whole sum of Christian doctrine from the time of the apostles. The Council of Trent declares that the Christian faith and discipline are comprised in Scripture and tradition, both of which have been "preserved in the Catholic Church by perpetual succession." Bellarmine establishes the controverted doctrines of the Roman Church by unwritten *apostolical tradition.* Bossuet declares that the Church "receives no dogma whatever that is not conformable to *the tradition of all past ages.*" Milner says, that the cry has ever been in the Roman Church, "So we have received: so the Universal Church believes: let there be *no new doctrine;* none but what has been *delivered down to us by tradition.*" Wiseman affirms: "We believe

[b] Tournely, Prælect. Theologicæ de Ecclesia, præf. p. xxii.

that no new doctrine can be introduced into the Church, but that *every doctrine* which we hold, has existed and been *taught* in it, ever since the time of the Apostles."

All this is wholly irreconcilable with the theory of development—of a progress in the knowledge and comprehension of the idea of Christianity—of the introduction of doctrines of the faith in later ages, of which the early Church was ignorant, or which it doubted—of a consequent variation and change in the doctrine of the Catholic Church, in different ages.

32. But it may be well to produce the direct arguments of eminent Roman Catholic divines, against the theory of development. It may be well to show that this theory is not only inconsistent with the general doctrine of the Church of Rome, but that it is directly impugned and refuted by the authorized expositors of that doctrine.

I will first appeal to the Jesuit Perrone, who fills with distinction the chair of theology at Rome. This writer, in maintaining the system of *authority* as the basis of faith, remarks that "Faith in general is nothing else but an assent given to some one on account of his authority. But the Apostles, having been instructed by Christ in the truths of the faith, delivered these same truths to successors chosen by them, that they in like manner might *transmit them entire, even to the latest posterity*, such as they had received them, without any discussion. The Apostles and their successors, again, propounded *the very same doctrines* to unbelievers to be believed by them; and since that whole supernatural system exceeded human comprehension, they wrought miracles, or expounded

motives of credibility, that their obedience to the faith might be *reasonable*[c]." Here we find that the Catholic faith is supposed to have existed *always*, without variation, in the Church; and that so full and perfect was the knowledge of the Church at all times from the beginning, that faith itself always rested on her authority; which could not have been the case, if she were supposed to be less instructed in one age than in another. And this is a point which deserves especial notice. The Infallibility of the Church is, as we know, denied by those who assert, that after a time, she fell into errors contrary to the faith—that she began with pure and perfect knowledge, and afterwards lapsed into heresies and idolatries; but the very same inference follows, if we suppose that the Church was at first uncertain or ignorant of the whole extent of the Catholic faith, and that she only gradually attained to it in the same way in which the human mind makes advances in science, or in other inventions of uninspired reason.

But I must proceed to adduce the more direct arguments of this learned Jesuit, against doctrines in almost all respects identical with those of Messrs. Newman and Ward, propounded by the rationalists Henke and Sartorius. Henke remarks, that "the definitions of faith which the Catholic Church has successively put forth, are so many proofs of *progress* and *perfectibility of system*, which Protestantism has adopted[d]."

What is Perrone's answer? It is this: "I admit [progress], *i. e.* greater elucidation *of the doctrine*

[c] Perrone, Prælect. Theologicæ, tom. i. p. 277, 278.

[d] Ibid. tom. i. p. 310, ed. Lovan.

*already received*, by reason of those who have impugned some article; I deny [progress], by the introduction of new dogmas. That is to say, the Church, on occasion of some wicked attempt to violate the doctrine *received in the Church*, has submitted the controverted article to a more careful examination, and has maintained it as her own by an express definition of that article, and a condemnation of the opposite *novelty*. Thus the Church has constantly acted; and in order to attain this, she *always has appealed to ancient monuments and the received faith*, as any one may see from the history of the Councils[e]."

In reply to the assertion of Henke, that "the doctrines of faith of which the Catholic Church boasts, are the inventions of one or another Father of that Church," (are we not here reminded of the anticipations of Catholic doctrine by individuals, of which Mr. Newman speaks?) he says, "The doctrines of the faith [*e. g.* the Trinity, Incarnation, &c.] are so many truths divinely revealed, which the Church received from Christ to be transmitted to posterity, and inviolably preserved from the gnawing tooth of innovation. As regards the supposed inventions of the Fathers, it is a mere gratuitous assertion of the adversary, without any foundation, indeed evidently contrary to all historical documents. This is what St. Augustine wrote of the Fathers of the Church in his time: '*Quod invenerunt in Ecclesia, tenuerunt; quod didicerunt, docuerunt; quod a Patribus acceperunt, hoc filiis tradiderunt;*' and long before St. Augustine, Tertullian said, '*Quicunque hac regula incedimus, quam Ecclesia ab Apostolis, Apostoli a Christo,*

[e] Perrone, Prælect. Theol. t. i. p. 311, ed. Lovan.

*Christus a Deo tradidit, constat ratio propositi nostri;*' and they thus distinguished the Catholics from heretics, who dared to pollute with their novelties the ancient doctrine of the Catholic Church[f]."

The same writer replies thus to the assertion of Sartorius, that the popes and councils of the Roman Church act on the principle of Rationalism, by confirming their own opinions, not by the Scripture, but by a pretended inward inspiration of the Holy Ghost. "The pontiffs and councils never publish definitions of faith, unless they be founded on the word of God or Divine revelation, which has come to us by Scripture and by tradition: *they never obtrude any thing of their own, but are witnesses of the doctrine which Christ taught, and the Apostles delivered*[g]."

33. The remarks of another Roman Catholic divine on the rationalistic doctrine of development or perfectibility, are also worthy of notice. In reply to the assertion, that many things pertaining to religion are in a process of continual change, even amongst Roman Catholics, with a view to attain greater purity and perfection, he says:—"It is the constant rule of Catholics, that *no change can take place in what concerns the doctrine of revealed religion.* The whole anxiety of the Church is to correct the evil habits of those who are opposed to the commandments of God, to restrain those who corrupt the Christian revelation, and to remove whatever abuses have crept in." In reply to those who argue, that the appearance of modern theology even amongst Roman Catholics, is altogether different from the ancient, he says, "If we

[f] Perrone, Prælect. Theol. t. i. p. 311, 312. [g] P. 315.

contend that the Christian religion cannot be made more perfect in time, it is not so to be understood, as if it were not lawful to make any change in the manner of teaching religion. Religion itself, which has been brought to us from Heaven, *cannot be treated like a human science;* but the method employed to unfold and place its doctrines in a clearer light, may become more perfect, as human ingenuity is requisite; provided that, as Vincentius Lirinensis says, '*dum nove dicitur, non dicantur nova*[h].' "

Thus we have seen the uniform testimony of Scripture, of the Councils, of the Fathers, of the Roman Church, nay, of the Jesuits themselves, in opposition to the theory of development.

34. But there is one other witness whom we must call, to make this chain of testimony complete. That witness is the author of the "Essay on Development."

Earnestly as this writer has laboured to render the principle of appeal to Catholic antiquity of no avail; to demonstrate the ignorance, or uncertainty, or heresy, which overshadowed the mind of the primitive Church; and to maintain the necessity of perpetual novelty, variation, and change in the articles of the Christian faith; still the weight of the dogmatic principle in the Catholic Church has brought him, in opposition to his own theory, to confess substantially all that we contend for.

He remarks, that the dogmatic principle, or the assertion of doctrines, is a peculiar characteristic of the Gospel; that our Lord was the first to bear

[h] Institut. Theolog. auctore F. L. B. Liebermann, Dicec. Argentorat. Vic. Gen. Mogunt. 1836, tom. i. p. 29.

witness to "the truth," and to die for it; that St. John and St. Paul pronounce anathema on those who "denied the truth," or brought in "another gospel[i];" that it was "the duty of every individual Christian, from the first, to witness in his place against *all opinions* which were contrary to what he had received in his baptismal catechizing[j];" [How was this possible, if the idea of Christianity was imperfectly comprehended?] that "the truth to which they were to bear witness," was a "something definite, and formal, and independent of themselves," which they were bound "to defend and to transmit[k];" that the Fathers attest the duty of adhering to the faith received by tradition [Observe, not by development] from the beginning[l]; that it is essential to defend and maintain this Catholic faith: all this is fully and unreservedly admitted by Mr. Newman. He also speaks of "the horror of heresy[m]" and of novelty[n] which always existed in the Church; and even remarks, that "novelty and originality of manifestation" is the very characteristic of heresy.

Now what is the meaning of all this? Why are we thus continually referred back to the past—to the beginning of the Church—to traditional teaching? And why this dread of novelty, as such? Is it not evidently based on the principle, that Christianity, as a dogma, an objective religion, a definite body of articles of faith,—existed from the beginning, in the Church, in its fulness and perfection; that it was always clearly understood; that no new discoveries

[i] Essay on Development. p. 339.
[j] P. 340.
[k] P. 341.
[l] P. 341—344.
[m] P. 367.
[n] P. 344.

of dogma were to be looked for; that it was the office of faith, not to invent novelties, but to hand down unimpaired, in its full integrity, "the faith once delivered to the saints" by the inspired founders of Christianity? In fact, this writer himself, though unable to produce any authorities from the Fathers, or Councils, or from the Theology of the Church of Rome, or of the Oriental Church, in support of his theory, is still reluctant to confess the absolute novelty of the doctrine; and accordingly, in the absence of all tangible evidence on the subject, he leaves his readers under the impression that antiquity is not wholly unfavourable to the theory. "The view on which" this essay "is written, has at all times, perhaps, been implicitly adopted by theologians!" Thus, in the very act of enunciating a principle which goes to subvert the authority of all past tradition, the author is unable to avoid bearing his involuntary testimony to the force of the argument founded on it. His *conjecture*, at least, is, that the truth has always been taught—that it has not been gradually comprehended or disclosed in the course of ages.

And this conclusion follows also from the principle which so frequently occurs in the Essay—that we ought to assume the faith of the existing Church as an exponent of that of the Church from the beginning. This, of course, supposes that the same belief has been held throughout, and that there has been no real change. It follows again, from the notion, that true developments are derived by logical sequence from the original ideas of Christianity; for this rests on the assumption, that those ideas were accurately and fully comprehended at

first; because developments based on an imperfect or mistaken knowledge would be, almost certainly, corruptions.

We might be well contented at this point to leave the subject to the Reader's impartial judgment: we might with confidence appeal to the fact, that notwithstanding the perfect command which the author of "the Essay on Development" possesses of all the resources of Christian antiquity, he has not been able to adduce a single testimony in support of his theory, from any one of the Catholic Fathers, or of the councils of the Church; and we might contrast with this deficiency of proof, the mass of evidence which has been produced on the other side, and which is nothing more than a mere specimen of the unanimous teaching of the Church from the earliest ages. We might remind the reader, that the Apostles themselves, the martyrs, the confessors, and the doctors of the Church, concurred in their appeal to the deposit of the faith "once delivered,"—a faith which was from the beginning received and taught without imperfection, or corruption, or error. We might point to the fact, that while "the theory of development" rejects the principle of Vincentius Lirinensis, that principle has been adopted by all the Fathers, and by the Church of Rome herself. And we might confidently ask, whether a Theory thus novel—a theory which its author is obliged to guard from immediate rejection, by referring to the discovery of "the theory of gravitation" in physical science as a parallel instance—whether such a novelty, so openly at variance with the doctrine of the Church in all ages, is not to be at once rejected as heterodox?

But our task is not yet brought to a close. It re-

mains to be shown, that the doctrine which we have seen taught in Scripture and received by all Antiquity, has been upheld also by the English Church, and by the Reformation generally. I adduce this additional evidence, not merely for the purpose of refuting the false notions of development which we have been considering, but to show the general agreement of Christians in the essential idea of revelation. It is of importance at the present time to remark, that Christians in all ages, even though differing from each other on certain points of doctrine, have on the whole agreed, that revelation was a code of faith and morals which was "once delivered to the saints,"—was delivered in its full integrity by the Apostles to the universal Church—was handed down in the Church by succession—was not misunderstood and corrupted even from the beginning—and was not to receive additions, or developments, or novelties in after-times by the exercise of uninspired reason. This alone corresponds with the idea of a revelation made by God for the salvation of a perishing world. Such an idea at once excludes the notion of corruption and imperfection in the revelation at its first announcement by inspired teachers, or of subsequent purity and increase of light by the agency of uninspired reason.

It is on this principle that all appeals to Apostolical tradition are founded. It is very credible, that a revelation may have been corrupted or forsaken in time. It was so, we know, before the mission of Noah, and Abraham, and Moses. It was so before the mission of the Son of God. But, at the beginning, the doctrines of revelation cannot have been misunderstood. The Christian faith, universally re-

ceived, cannot have been from the beginning, imperfect or erroneous: it cannot have been left with deficiencies or "gaps," which human reason was afterwards to fill up.

Now let us look to the doctrines of the English Church and of the Reformation on this subject.

Archbishop Cranmer evidently acknowledged the authority of universal tradition. In his speech on general councils, A. D. 1534, he said, "that when all the Fathers agreed in the exposition of any place of Scripture, he acknowledged he looked on that as flowing from the Spirit of God; and it was a most dangerous thing to be wise in our own conceits[o]." In reference to certain writings of Zuinglius and Œcolampadius, he said, "so far as they have endeavoured to point out and correct papistical and sophistical errors, I praise and approve them. And would that they had contained themselves within these bounds, and had not trampled on the fruit as well as the tares, that is, violated at the same time the authority of the ancient doctors, and earlier writers in the Church of Christ[p]." Bishop Ridley protested that he did not dispute a doctrine "founded in the word of God, and illustrated by the commentaries of the orthodox Fathers[q]." Bishop Jewell, in the Apology for the Church of England, which was approved by Authority, said: "We are come as near as we possibly could to the Church of the Apostles and of the old Catholic bishops and Fathers; and have directed, according to their custom and ordinances, not only our doctrine, but also the sacraments, and the form

[o] Cranmer's Works, vol. ii. p. 14.

[p] Vol. i. p. 195.

[q] Ridlæi Protestatio, Enchirid. Theologic. p. 53.

of common prayer[r]." The Homilies composed in 1547 and 1562 continually refer to the authority of the Fathers in confirmation of the true doctrine[s]; and the convocation of the clergy of England in 1571, again solemnly recognized the principle for which we contend, in their canon concerning preachers: "Let preachers above all things be careful that they never teach aught in a sermon to be religiously held and believed by the people, except that which is agreeable to the doctrine of the Old and New Testament, and which the Catholic Fathers and bishops have collected from that very doctrine[t]."

I might appeal in further illustration of the principles of the English Church on this subject to the concurrent testimonies of such writers as Poynet, Philpot, Bradford, Taylor, Nowell, Hooker, Bancroft, Andrewes, Bilson, Overall, Morton, Field, White, Hall, Laud, Montague, Jackson, Mede, Ussher, Bramhall, Sanderson, Cosin, Hammond, Thorndike, Jeremy Taylor, Heylin, Pearson, Barrow, Bull, Stillingfleet, Ken, Beveridge, Patrick, Sharpe, Leslie, Potter, Grabe, Brett, Hicks, Leslie, Waterland, Bingham, Jebb, Van Mildert[u]. If anything is clear and unquestionable, it is this, that English theology has invariably

[r] Jewell, Apologia, p. 156, ed. 1606.

[s] See Sermon concerning Prayer, part 2, Place and Time of Prayer, ad fin.; Homily on Common Prayer and Sacraments; Sermon on Alms-deeds, &c.

[t] Wilkins, Concilia, t. iv. p. 267.

[u] See Waterland on the Trinity, Works, vol. v. p. 265—316. Bishop Jebb's Sermons (Appendix). Dr. Hook's "Call to Union on the Principles of the English Reformation," Archdeacon E. Churton's Sermon, "The Church of England a Witness and Keeper of the Catholic Tradition." Archdeacon Manning on the Rule of Faith. Mr. Russell's "Judgment of the Anglican Church."

appealed without hesitation, in defence of its doctrines, to the tradition of the primitive Church.

36. There has been less unanimity amongst the adherents of the foreign Reformation on this subject. I do not, of course, take into account the modern philosophical systems which have replaced the doctrines and principles of the Reformation; because they reject authority of every kind, and found religion solely on instinct or reason, or on some other principle which actually or virtually excludes the very notion of Revelation. But amongst the real adherents of the foreign Reformation, there was certainly less agreement in an appeal to Christian antiquity, than has been the case in the English Church. Bishop Jebb[v] and other writers have, however, I think, drawn too marked a distinction between the cases. There are many examples in the foreign Reformation of principles substantially in accordance with those of our divines.

The Commonitorium of Vincentius Lirinensis has been highly commended by the Centuriators of Magdeburg, by Caspar Barnt, by Casaubon, Hottinger, Hugo Grotius, Osiander, Calixtus. Roesler, a theologian of Tubingen, states that all the ancient Lutherans had a high value for this work of Vincentius[w]. It has been justly remarked by an eminent divine, that the Rationalists "have professed most falsely to walk in the same steps as the early Reformers, and to complete what they began. These Reformers, in-

[v] The rule of interpreting Scripture by Scripture, which was the basis of the Lutheran exegesis, does not seem liable in itself to the objections proposed by this excellent prelate, in the Appendix to his Sermons. It is, in fact, recommended by Irenæus, adv. Hæres. lib. ii. c. 27.

[w] Klüpfel, Commonitor. Vincent. Prolegomena, p. 35, 36.

defensible as they might be in minor points, indulged in no such criminal dreams or intentions. They entertained, for example, the most reasonable belief as to the value and authority of the early Christian writers, as proofs and witnesses of the doctrines promulgated in early times. As the Romish Church alleged in justification of her opinions, the words of Scripture, and the authority of the ancient writers, the Reformers, so far from denying the value of those writers, constantly (even in their symbolical writings) appeal to them in proof of the correctness of their own views. It is indeed their boast that they maintain no article of faith which had not been equally maintained by the primitive Church; and that they rejected none which she recognized. The concluding assertion of the confession of Augsburg is, that in the sense of the doctrines there exhibited, there is not a single article at variance with Scripture, with the Catholic Church, or with the Romish Church itself, as far as it was known from its writers. The Apology for the confession abounds in similar assertions, and in appeals to the early Fathers; and even states that the preachers of the new profession appealed to the same testimony, as well as to Scripture, in their public discourses. It is this very circumstance which has been made a subject of reproach against the early reformers by the modern school of theology[x]." They assert that "down to the eighteenth century, appeals were made only to the writings of the Fathers, whose ignorance, prejudices, and want of philosophical illumination, deprived their evidence and opinions of all value[y]."

[x] Rose, Protest. in Germany, p. 35—37, 2nd ed. [y] P. 39.

37. Though Luther and the other Reformers sometimes expressed themselves in a way which argues little respect for the early writers, it must be remembered that they did so, only when individual writers were appealed to as *authorities*, and not as mere witnesses of Catholic tradition. And in this point of view, they were not to be blamed for rejecting the authority of individual writers, when their sentiments appeared to be inconsistent with the doctrine of holy Scripture. Augustine himself distinctly rejected the notion of attributing authority, properly so called, to the sentiments of individual Fathers. Thus, in speaking of the Donatists, he says: "Whether they be of the Church, can be known in no other way but by the canonical books of the Divine Scriptures. Neither do we claim to be of the Church because we have the testimony of Optatus of Milevis or Ambrose of Milan, or any other bishops of our communion, be they ever so numerous; or because we have on our side decrees of the councils of our colleagues[z]." Again, in reference to an Epistle of Cyprian, he says: "I am not bound by the authority of that epistle, because the writings of Cyprian are not canonical; but I examine them by canonical Scripture; and whatever in them is agreeable to the authority of the Divine Scripture, I receive with applause; and what is not agreeable to it, with his good leave I reject[a]." "Other authors," besides the canonical Scriptures, "I so read, that, however distinguished they may be for learning and piety, I do not believe any thing to be true, because it was their

[z] Augustin. de Unitate Ecclesiæ, cap. xix.

[a] Contra Crescon. Donatist. l. ii. c. 32.

opinion, but because they have been able to persuade me, either by the authority of the canonical writers above mentioned, or by probable reason, that it is agreeable to truth[b]."

This language of Augustine seems fully to excuse those, who have at any time refused to accept the doctrines of particular Fathers, when urged as if they were in themselves authoritative and binding on our faith. In any such case it is very reasonable to appeal to Scripture as of prior authority.

38. On the whole, then, it has, I trust, been sufficiently proved, that the theory of development is rationalistic in its tendency; that it is unsupported by theological reasoning, by Scripture, or by Christian antiquity; that it is *primâ facie* improbable; that it is inconsistent with the language of the New Testament; that the contradictory principle of appeal to Antiquity has ever been received in the Catholic Church, and even by sects and heresies; that this principle was, from the period of the Reformation, acknowledged, by the Church of Rome, by the Church of England, by the Protestant Reformation, generally; as it still is by the Oriental Church. In every part of the Christian world, the appeal, in all matters of controversy, has invariably been, not merely to Scripture (which, according to the advocates of development, was not comprehended in the earlier ages); but *to the doctrine of the Church from the beginning.* And this appeal is based on the principle, that the Church, even from the beginning, comprehended the idea of Christianity at least as perfectly as she did at any subsequent time. For if the comprehension of the first ages had

[b] Ad Hieron. Epist. 82, c. i.

been considered to be imperfect, it would have been absurd to appeal to their doctrines; or to any authority except that of the Scripture and the existing Church.

There is, however, one remaining argument in reference to the theory of development, which will perhaps weigh more with those who are inclined to favour it, than what has been already adduced—I allude to its bearing on *Romanism*.

## CHAPTER IX.

### EVIDENCES AGAINST ROMANISM AFFORDED BY THE THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT.

1. It has been argued by the author of the Essay on Development and by other writers, that in determining the questions at issue between different Christian communities, with a view to a choice of one of them as a religious profession, the generality of men must be guided by presumptive reasoning and probabilities, involving no great learning or research. This is obviously true: men for the most part must be guided by the authority or credibility of others in forming their religious belief. They are unable to consult the Scriptures, the writings of ancient and modern theologians, the doctrinal judgments of the Church, the decrees of popes and councils, the monuments of tradition: their doctrine must be chiefly founded on the credible testimony of those teachers and believers, with whom they are brought into immediate relations.

This is the case with the great mass of the community at all times; and yet such persons, though incapable of instituting an accurate or profound research into religious questions, are not left without sufficient ways and methods of attaining to some

reasonable conviction, when they are called upon to make choice of a religious profession.

Now there is one argument which does not involve the necessity of any profound research, and which is open to general comprehension: it is this. If any religious system is based on principles which are mutually destructive;—if one of its fundamental doctrines cannot be admitted without contradicting another; then such a system must include falsehood in its essence, and consequently it cannot be a safe guide to religious truth. On the other hand, if a system be substantially consistent in its principles, such consistency affords a presumptive, though not a conclusive argument in favour of its truth.

This argument has been applied by the author of the Essay on Development, to the controversies between Romanism and the Reformation. "M. Guizot," he says, "has contrasted the consistency of the Church of Rome with the inconsistency of its heretical opponents, in the points which came into controversy between them. 'The Reformers are told,' he says, 'You provoke licentiousness, you produce it; but yet when you discover it, you wish to constrain and repress it. And how do you repress it? By the most hard and violent means: you persecute heresy too, by virtue of an illegitimate authority.' These reproaches much embarrassed the Reformers. When the multitude of different sects was charged against them, instead of acknowledging the legitimacy of their free development, they sought to anathematize dissenters, were annoyed by their existence, and sought some apology for it.'" "With this inconsistency he contrasts *the harmonious completeness and the decision of the Roman Catholic theology.* 'The

adversaries of the Reformation,' he says, 'knew very well what they were about, and what they required; they could point to their first principles, and boldly admit all the consequences that might result from them. No government was ever more consistent and systematic than that of the Romish Church . . . There is an immense power in this full confidence of what is done; this perfect knowledge of what is required; this complete and rational adaptation of a system and a creed.' . . . This representation of the *consistency* of the [Roman] Catholic system will be found to be true, even in respect of those peculiarities of it, which have been considered by Protestants most open to the charge of corruption and innovation[a]."

The coherence and consistency of Romanism have indeed been repeatedly urged in recent publications as a very convincing evidence of its truth. The authors of the "Essay on Development," and the "Ideal of a Christian Church," seem to rest the force of their argument in favour of Romanism very much on this consideration; and it is also a favourite topic with such writers as Dr. Milner, Wiseman, and others, who have written expressly in defence of that system.

Let us then endeavour to ascertain the bearing of this argument on the main questions at issue between Romanism and the Reformation in general, and determine whether the former is, or is not, consistent in its fundamental principles.

2. We have already seen[b], that Romanism adopts

[a] Newman, Essay on Development, p. 432, 433.

[b] See above, chapter ii.

contradictory principles with reference to holy Scripture and testimony in general, in its argument with Protestantism and Infidelity respectively. In the former case it asserts, what in the latter it denies, that the genuineness, authenticity, inspiration, and true meaning of Scripture, are wholly dependent for proof on the authority of the existing Church; and consequently it subverts on the one hand the very foundation of the Christian revelation, as on the other it destroys the basis of its argument against Protestantism. This is an inconsistency which Romanists have often vainly endeavoured to escape from; but they have never been able to do so without relinquishing either the defence of Christianity, or the vital principles of their peculiar theology. Either the Scripture, and the historical and internal evidences of Christianity furnish in themselves sufficient motives to a true and reasonable faith, or they do not. If they do not, belief in Christianity and in the Church cannot be founded on them: if they do, faith is not necessarily founded on the authority of the existing Church.

Thus Romanism is self-destructive in its first principles; and therefore it cannot possibly be a true system of religion. Whatever may be said of other systems, this at least may be at once set aside. No apparent amount of authority or plausibility would suffice to establish the truth of a religion, which is based on irreconcileable contradictions.

3. But it is not merely in these fundamental principles that Romanism is a self-destructive system: it carries the same fatal flaw throughout the whole of its argument with the Reformation. There is the same species of contradiction every where to be found in

its argument on behalf of the peculiar tenets which it maintains. To descend to particulars, it will be found, that Romanism, after having unanimously asserted for ages, that its peculiarities are derived by unwritten tradition from the Apostles, is now obliged to profess, that those peculiarities did not exist at all, and could not possibly have existed, for several centuries after the Apostles. For this concession we are indebted to those Romanists who are advocates of the theory of development in some shape; and Mr. Newman's work especially will be found highly valuable in establishing so important a truth. The discussion will carry us on, after the establishment of this vital contradiction in the Roman theology, to the sources from which that theology has been drawn, according to the statements of its present advocates; and to the advantages which the new system of argument on behalf of Romanism furnishes to its opponents, as well Christians as Heathens.

4. The objection which was made to the peculiar doctrines and practices of Romanism by the adherents of the Reformation was, invariably, that they had no support from Scripture, and that they were in fact inconsistent with it. Now it is perfectly obvious at first sight, that such tenets and practices as purgatory, indulgences, prayers to saints and angels, auricular confession, the sacrifice of the mass, the papal supremacy, have either no kind of support from Scriptural texts, or at best a very weak[c] and equivocal one;

[c] This is admitted by intelligent Romanists. Thus, "The Faith of Catholics," a publication of considerable authority, remarks, that "the Catholic reader will be sensible, should any point of his belief receive little or no support from Scripture, that its truth and apostolical origin is not affected," and

and that much may be adduced in opposition to them, from Scripture. These are the simple and admitted facts of the case.

5. Now it would be of course unreasonable for an inquirer to assume at once the validity of this argument; but thus much is very evident, that it is confirmed by the course pursued by the advocates of Romanism in reply to these objections. The position which they invariably adopted was this:—that the tenets of their Church, in all the controverted points, had been transmitted without change from the Apostles themselves, by *unwritten* tradition. The Council of Trent, according to the received interpretation, acknowledges this tradition: "The sacred, holy, œcumenical, and general Council of Trent . . . having constantly in view the removal of error and the preservation of the purity of the Gospel in the Church; which Gospel, promised before by the Prophets in the holy Scriptures, was first orally published by our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who afterwards commanded it to be preached by his Apostles to every creature, as the source of saving faith and discipline; and perceiving that this truth and discipline are contained both in written books, and in unwritten traditions which have come down to us, either received by the Apostles from the lips of Christ Himself, or transmitted by the hands of the same Apostles under the dictation of the Holy Spirit; following the example of the orthodox Fathers, doth receive and reverence with equal piety and venera-

therefore "that the doctrines of *Purgatory* and the *Invocation of Saints* stand on the same foundation as that of the *authority* of the Church, though, in support of the former, the evidence of Scripture be comparatively weak." P. xxvii.

tion, all the books as well of the Old as of the New Testament; the same God being the Author of both; and also the aforesaid traditions, pertaining both to faith and manners, whether received from Christ Himself, or dictated by the Holy Spirit, and preserved in the Catholic Church by continual succession[d]." It will here be observed, that "unwritten traditions," so far as they exist at all, are supposed to have been preserved from the beginning by "continual succession."

6. Of course such a principle, if well founded, was a very satisfactory answer to objections founded on the deficiency of *Scriptural* evidence for Romish tenets. It was quite sufficient to prove that a tenet had been actually taught by the inspired authors of the Scriptures. If such a principle was applicable to the tenets of Romanism, their defence was complete. Accordingly this became the chief common place in the writings of their controversialists. Bellarmine, for instance, after remarking that "unwritten tradition" means what was not "written by its first authors," *i. e.* by the Apostles, yet is written in many of the works of the Fathers[e], proceeds to argue that religion was preserved from the Creation to the time of Moses, by unwritten tradition; that it was also prior to the Scriptures in the Christian dispensation; that Scripture is insufficient to decide all questions which may arise; that "unwritten tradition" is necessary to establish the genuineness and inspiration of Scripture[f]. He confirms his position by arguments

[d] Concil. Trident. Sessio iv. Decretum de Canonicis Scripturis.

[e] Bellarmin. de Verbo Dei Scripto et non Scripto, lib. iv. c. i.

[f] De Verbo Dei Scripto et non Scripto, l. iv. c. iv. "Tria de-

derived from Scripture, and from the records of the Church; and by various other reasons; and then proceeds to lay down five rules for determining what are apostolical traditions[g].

The first rule is: "When the universal Church

monstrare conabimur. Primum Scripturas sine traditionibus nec fuisse simpliciter necessarias nec sufficientes . . . *Primum* probo ex variis ætatibus Ecclesiæ. Nam ab Adam usque ad Mosem fuit Ecclesia Dei aliqua in mundo . . . at nulla fuit Scriptura divina ante Mosem, ut patet . . Deinde a Mose usque ad Christum per alia duo annorum millia, extiterunt quidem Scripturæ, tamen eæ solæ erant Judæorum; reliquæ autem gentes, in quibus etiam erat apud aliquos vera religio et fides, sola traditione non scripta utebantur. . . .

Porro a Christi adventu per annos multos fuit Ecclesia sine Scripturis, ita ut adhuc suo tempore scribat Irenæus, lib. iii. c. 4, fuisse gentes aliquas Christianas, quæ solis traditionibus sine Scriptura optime viverent . . .

Quod autem Scripturæ, non omnia ita contineant, ut sufficiant ipsæ sine alia traditione, probo. *Primo* . . . Probatur tertio, ex multis quæ ignorari non possunt, et tamen in Scripturis non continentur. Ac *primum*, tempore Testamenti Veteris sine dubio non minus fœminæ quam viri remedium aliquod habebant, quo a peccato originali purgarentur; et tamen pro masculis instituta erat circumcisio, secundum multorum opinionem; quid autem esset pro fœminis, nusquam habet Scriptura. *Deinde* eorum tempore non est ullo modo credibile, non fuisse remedium ullum pro masculis morientibus ante octavum diem, quo solo poterunt circumcidi; et tamen nihil extat de hac re in Scriptura. *Tertio*, Gentiles multi salvari poterant, et salvabantur tempore Testamenti Veteris . . . et tamen nihil prorsus de eorum justificatione a peccato originali, aliisque peccatis in Scriptura habetur.

*Quarto*, necesse est nosse, extare libros aliquos vere divinos, quod certe nullo modo ex Scripturis haberi potest. Nam etiamsi Scriptura dicat, libros Prophetarum et Apostolorum esse divinos, tamen non certo id credam, nisi prius credidero, Scripturam quæ hoc dicit, esse divinam . . . Itaque hoc dogma necessarium, quod scilicet aliqua sit Scriptura divina, non potest sufficienter haberi ex *sola Scriptura* . . . *Quinto*, non satis est scire, esse Scripturam divinam, sed oportet scire, *quæ sit illa*, id quod nullo modo potest haberi ex Scripturis. Quomodo enim colligemus ex Scriptura, Evangelia Marci et Lucæ esse vera Evangelia: Thomæ et Bartholomæi esse falsa?"

[g] Ibid. cap. ix.

embraces any thing as a dogma of the faith which is not found in holy Scripture, it is necessary to say that it is derived from apostolical tradition." The reason assigned is, that "whatever the Church believes to be a matter of faith, doubtless *is* so; but nothing is a matter of faith, unless what God has revealed through the Apostles or prophets, or which is evidently deduced from it. For the Church is not now directed by *new revelations*, but *continues* in those things which those who were ministers of the word delivered to her." Amongst apostolical traditions thus established, are reckoned "the perpetual virginity of St. Mary," and "the number of the canonical books[h]."

Another rule is: "When the universal Church observes somewhat, which no one else but God could have established; which is however no where found in Scripture; it must be said that it was a tradition from Jesus Christ and his Apostles." He considers "infant baptism" to be such a tradition, and also the doctrine of the "validity of heretical baptism[i]."

A third rule is: "That which has been preserved in the universal Church in all former ages is rightly believed to have been instituted by the Apostles." The "Lent Fast" is instanced as a tradition thus established[j].

A fourth rule is this: "When all the doctors of the Church, whether assembled in council, or in

[h] Cap. ix. "Igitur illa omnia quæ Ecclesia fide tenet, tradita sunt ab Apostolis aut Prophetis, aut scripto, aut verbo. Talis est perpetua Virginitas B. Mariæ, numerus librorum Canonicorum, et similia."

[i] Ibid. "Tale est baptisma parvulorum. Erraret enim gravissime Ecclesia, si sine Dei mandato parvulos, qui actu non credunt, baptizaret. . . . Tale est etiam, baptismum hæreticorum esse ratum."

[j] Ibid. "Exemplum sit jejunium Quadragesimæ."

their separate writings, unanimously teach that something has descended from apostolical tradition, that is to be received as *an apostolical tradition*." The "worship of images" is adduced as an example of an *apostolical tradition* thus supported [k].

The fifth rule is: "That is without doubt to be considered apostolical, which is held for such in those Churches, in which there is a complete and continued succession from the Apostles." So that, "if in any Church, ascending through bishops succeeding each other, we arrive at one of the Apostles, and it cannot be shown that any of these bishops introduced a *novel* doctrine, we may be sure that the apostolical traditions are preserved there." Bellarmine adds, that since the apostolical succession of bishops has failed or been interrupted in all Churches except the Roman, the latter is now the only Church to which we can appeal for the purpose of ascertaining apostolical traditions, and its testimony may be regarded as "a certain proof" in any question of the kind.

These rules, it is evident, are calculated to be of infinite advantage to the defenders of Roman tenets. They supply a perfectly intelligible, clear, and consistent account of the origin of those tenets. And accordingly, Roman Catholic controversialists have ever since availed themselves of this whole system; they have regularly contended, that their tenets have

[k] De Verbo Dei Scripto, et non Scripto. "Ratio est hujus regulæ—quia si omnes doctores Ecclesiæ, cum in aliqua sententia conveniunt, errare possent, tota Ecclesia erraret, quippe quæ doctores suos sequi tenetur et sequitur. Exemplum primi est, imaginum veneratio: quam esse ex Apostolica traditione asseruerunt doctores Ecclesiæ congregati in *Concil. Nicen.* II. generali."

been *always* held in the Church; that there has been no variation in its doctrines; that those doctrines were taught by the Apostles. The Papal Supremacy, Purgatory, the Worship of Images and Relics, the Sacrifice of the Mass, Worship of Saints and Angels, Monachism, Auricular Confession, Indulgences, the Prerogatives of the Virgin Mary, and all the other points of their system, are always supposed to have been either written in Scripture, or else handed down by unwritten tradition.

6. Bossuet, in writing on "Scripture and Tradition," says, "Jesus Christ having laid the foundation of his Church in preaching, the *unwritten word* was consequently the first rule of Christianity; and when the writings of the New Testament were added to it, its authority was not forfeited on that account; which makes us receive with equal veneration all that hath been taught by the Apostles, whether in writing or by word of mouth; which St. Paul expressly recommends to the Thessalonians. And a most certain mark that a doctrine comes *from the Apostles* is, when all Christian Churches embrace it, without its being in the power of any one to show when it had a beginning . . . it being impossible to believe that a doctrine received from the very commencement of the Church, could ever have come from any other source than *from the Apostles*. For which reason, our adversaries should not be surprised if we, who are so earnest in collecting all that our fathers have left us, do preserve the deposit of tradition as carefully as that of the Scripture[1]." The Church, he remarks, "openly professes that she

[1] Bossuet, Exposition (on Scripture and Tradition), p. 91.

says nothing from herself; that she invents no new doctrine." She has bound herself to interpret the Scripture, "in what regards faith and morality, according to the sense of the holy Fathers, from which she professes never to depart; declaring, by all her councils, and by all her professions of faith, that she receives no dogma whatever, that is not conformable to the tradition of all preceding ages[m]."

7. Milner, in his "End of Controversy," is equally decided in his view of tradition, as a rule which does not admit of variation in doctrine, and which transmits the dogmas of Christianity without any change from the Apostles themselves. It is unreasonable, he argues, "to compare the essential traditions of religion with ordinary stories: in the truth of these, no one has an interest, and no means have been provided to preserve them from corruption; whereas, with respect to the faith once delivered to the saints, the Church has ever guarded it, as the apple of her eye . . . When any fresh controversy arises in the Church, the fundamental maxim of the bishops and popes, to whom it belongs to decide upon it, is, not to consult their own private opinion or interpretation of Scripture, but to inquire what is and has ever been the doctrine of the Church concerning it. Hence their cry is, and ever has been, on such occasions, as well in her councils as out of them: So we have received: so the universal Church believes: let there be no new doctrine: none but what has been delivered down to us by tradition . . . The tradition of which we now treat, is not a local but an universal tradition, as widely spread as the Catholic

[m] Bossuet, Exposition (on Scripture and Tradition), p. 96.

Church itself is, and every where found the same. Here then the maxim of the sententious Tertullian must be admitted: error of course varies, but that doctrine which is one and the same among many, is not an error but a tradition[n]." On this tradition Milner founds "prayers for the dead, addresses to the saints[o], the mass," &c. He argues, that it would have been *impossible to introduce these things at any time subsequent to the apostolic age.* "The doctrines and practices of the Church were in the hands of the people of all civilized nations, and therefore could not be altered without their knowledge and consent. Hence wherever religious novelties had been introduced, a violent opposition to them, and of course, schisms and tumults would have ensued . . . They could not assist at the religious services performed at the funerals of their relatives or on the festivals of the saints, without recollecting whether they had previously been instructed to *pray for* the former, and to *invoke the prayers* of the latter . . . In a word, there is but one way of accounting for the alleged *alterations* of the Church . . . which is to suppose that on some one night, all the Christians of the world went to sleep sound Protestants, and awoke the next morning rank Papists[p]."

Whatever may be thought of the argument in the above passage (with which I am not at present concerned), it is clear that Milner considered the peculiar doctrines of Romanism to have been handed down by unwritten tradition from the Apostles them-

[n] Milner, End of Controversy, letter xi. p. 98, 99.

[o] He considers the "lawfulness of invoking the prayers of saints" a Divine tradition. See p. 109.

[p] Letter xi. p. 100, 101.

selves, and to have existed always in the Church. "The Church of Christ," he says, "must be strictly one; one in doctrine[q]." With this unity he contrasts the variations of Protestants—"the material changes" which the English Church "has undergone at different times[r]."

8. The same view is taken in the well known and approved work of the Rev. Messrs. Berington and Kirk, entitled the "Faith of Catholics." "Our ministers in their public instructions to the people fail not to inculcate, that their Church never framed, nor frames, any new article of belief, but simply stated and states the doctrine which she received; which doctrine, they add, coming down to them through an uninterrupted series of tradition, is *the same that Christ taught, and the Apostles, instructed by him, delivered*[s]." Afterwards the following passage occurs:—"Many excellent tracts in this country and others have been compiled . . . to prove that all the points of Catholic belief were at all times taught as they now are[t]." "Antiquity is the badge of our faith . . . the Catholic creed in all its articles is clearly defined, and is as unchangeable as it has been unchanged[u]." This work professes to show, that "the doctrine now professed by Catholics" was, in the first five centuries, "taught and believed, not in one, but in all; not by one Father, but by a succession of them—as the faith of all the Churches;" and it is hence inferred to be "Apostolical[v]." "We believe," it is added, "that all the points of our faith, contained

[q] Letter xiv. p. 121.
[r] Letter xv. p. 124, 125.
[s] Faith of Catholics, Introduction, p. xi.
[t] P. xii.
[u] P. xiii.
[v] P. xvi.

in the series of the succeeding propositions," [this series amongst other subjects includes the Papal Supremacy, the Seven Sacraments, Sacrifice of the Mass, Auricular Confession, Purgatory, Indulgences, Celibacy of the Clergy, Monasticism, worship of Relics, Images, Saints, and Angels,] "as likewise such other points as are common to us and other Christian Societies, *were originally taught by Christ, and by him communicated to his Apostles*[w]."

9. Dr. Wiseman is equally positive in his assertion of the unchangeable nature of the doctrine of his Church in all ages. The doctrines which are held by Roman Catholics have, according to this writer, been held alike at all times. "By the *unwritten* word of God," he says, "we mean a body of doctrines, which, in consequence of express declarations in the written word, we believe not to have been committed to writing, but *delivered by Christ to his Apostles, and by the Apostles to their successors.* We believe, that no new doctrine can be introduced into the Church, but that *every doctrine* which we hold, has existed, and been taught in it, *ever since the time of the Apostles,* and was handed down by them to their successors, under the only guarantee on which we receive doctrines from the Church, that is, Christ's promises to abide with it for ever, to assist, direct, and instruct it, and always teach in and through it. So that while giving our implicit credit and trusting our judgment to it, we are believing and trusting to the express teaching and sanction of Christ himself[x]."

10. The principle then of Roman Catholics in

[w] Faith of Catholics, Introduction, p. li. lii.

[x] Wiseman, Lectures on the Doctrines and Practices of the Catholic Church, vol. i. p. 60.

general has been, that the peculiar tenets of their communion, which are either not recorded at all in Scripture, or very indistinctly referred to there, have been nevertheless derived from apostolic teaching, and accordingly preserved by unwritten tradition in the universal Church from the very beginning.

If this be the case, it may reasonably be anticipated, that the records of primitive Christianity, when examined, will attest the existence of Roman Catholic tenets in the universal Church from the earliest period: if those doctrines were really delivered to the Universal Church by the Apostles, there would be the same sort of evidence for their reception in the early ages, as there is for the reception of the other doctrines of the Gospel; and, accordingly, if we are to believe the majority of Roman Catholic writers, the testimony which Christian antiquity bears to their views is in the highest degree demonstrative and explicit. I shall avail myself here again of the work of Dr. Wiseman already referred to.

With reference to the doctrine of Satisfaction then, on which the doctrine of Purgatory and Indulgences is dependent, it is said, "If what I have stated be the doctrine of the Gospel, we must naturally expect to find some institution in the Church, from its earliest times, for the faithful practice of so essential a part of God's dispensations. And accordingly *from the beginning, we find nothing so prominently inculcated*, either in the writings of the early Fathers, or in the discipline of the Universal Church, as this necessity of doing penance and making satisfaction to God[y]."

As to Purgatory, we have the following statement:

[y] Wiseman, Lectures, vol. ii. p. 49.

"*Nothing can be more simple* than to establish the belief of the Universal Church on this point. The only difficulty is to select such passages as may appear the clearest[z]." After various citations, we are informed, that "these passages contain *precisely* the same doctrine as the Catholic Church teaches[a]." So again, Milner observes, that the ancient Fathers and writers "demonstrate that the doctrine of the Church was the same as it is now, not only within a thousand but within four hundred years from the time of Christ, with respect both to prayers for the dead, and an intermediate state which we call Purgatory[b]."

With reference to Indulgences, Dr. Wiseman undertakes to show that "*the Church* in the earliest times" claimed and exercised this power; and he accordingly refers to Tertullian, Cyprian, and other of the Fathers and Councils in proof[c].

As to Invocation of Saints, it is asserted to have existed from the beginning to the same extent, at least, as it now does: "I can have," he says, "only one fear, one motive of hesitation, in laying before you passages on this subject. It is not that I may weary you by the number of my quotations . . . This is not my reason of apprehension, but it is that, in the authorities from the Fathers, their expressions are so much stronger than those used by the Catholics at the present day, that there is a danger, if I may so say, of proving too much; they go beyond us . . . Let us begin with the very first ages of the Church, and let us take not ambiguous words, but the simplest and most natural expressions of the feelings of

[z] Wiseman, Lectures, vol. ii. p. 59.

[a] P. 63.

[b] End of Controversy, letter xliii. p. 312.

[c] Lectures, vol. ii. p. 76.

the *earliest* Christians[d]." And we have then references to various real or pretended monuments of the earliest ages. The evidence is so demonstrative, in the writer's opinion, that he triumphantly asks, "What are we to say to these testimonies? Nothing can be more manifest, than that the doctrine of these Fathers is *precisely the same* as I have laid down, and just what is declared in the Council of Trent, or the catechism taught to our children[e]."

Again as to Relics:—"Nothing remains but, according to my practice, to read a few out of many passages, to show you that the ancient Christians believed all regarding relics as we do[f]." "There is literally no end to these testimonies[g]." On the subject of the Papal Supremacy we have the following: "The authority of Peter must have been intended to be perpetual in Christianity, because we find that from the earliest ages all acknowledge it to exist in his successors as their inherent right[h];" so that "all antiquity supports us in the belief" of the Papal Supremacy[i].

11. Let this suffice as a specimen of the confidence with which Roman Catholic writers have appealed to the monuments of Christian antiquity, to confirm their assertion, that those of their tenets which may not be distinctly comprised in Scripture, have been nevertheless handed down by continual tradition *from the Apostles*. The theory of the *Disciplina arcani* which has been of late brought forward by Trévern and other writers, is merely a modification of

[d] Lectures, vol. ii. p. 103, 104.
[e] P. 114.
[f] P. 122.
[g] P. 126.
[h] P. 281.
[i] P. 286.

this received system of argument. It brings prominently into view the reserve practised in the Primitive Church, with reference to certain rites which were not to be described before unbelievers; and employs it as an argument in behalf of certain Romish doctrines supposed to have been thus privately taught.

The production of this theory, however, seems to have arisen in some degree from a secret consciousness, that the proof from Christian antiquity, for the doctrines in question, was not *quite* so clear and convincing as Roman Catholic writers in general represent it to be. The theory is calculated to explain the *silence* of the Fathers on various points, on which a Romanist would naturally have expected them to speak clearly and decisively.

12. Nor is this the only symptom of the same kind of consciousness. Perrone, in his series of Theological Lectures at Rome, notices an objection to his position, that the Church is the sole and infallible interpreter of Scripture and of unwritten tradition. This objection is grounded on "the controversies [concerning traditions] which existed in former ages, nay, in the very first ages of the Church," "between different Churches, and amongst the Fathers themselves." Perrone thus explains the fact of controversy on various articles of tradition:—"The Apostles consigned the Revelation received from Christ to particular individuals, *i. e.* the bishops, or to the particular Churches which they founded, and to which they wrote from time to time; nor, moreover, did they deliver it whole and entire to each, as one body of doctrine, but presented it as occasion offered; except those articles which are to be believed expli-

citly by all . . . Thus the particular bishops and Churches composing the Universal Church, could not immediately possess certainty as to those things which the Apostles had committed to bishops or Churches, *vivâ voce* or in writing. Hence arose . . . controversies on the number of the canonical books, and on the truth of some traditions, or the legitimate sense of certain passages of Scripture; until the Church decided or passed judgment on them, after comparing opinions[j]." Hence he admits, that particular Churches and individuals were not always uniform in their faith—that before questions were decided, there was occasionally "a difference of opinion," arising "from want of knowledge[k]."

13. Thus then it appears, that the testimony of primitive antiquity does not always so "precisely" coincide with the present tenets of Romanism as Dr. Wiseman, and other writers of the same stamp, would lead us to expect; and yet the assertions on this point have been so very positive, and the amount of evidence adduced is at first sight so imposing, to persons, at least, who are disposed to take such matters on trust[l], that it may be regarded as really providential, that Romanists themselves have at length been led, from one cause or another, to expose the extreme weakness and inconsistency of the system which has so long been prevalent amongst them. It was a laborious task for those who were capable of undertaking it, to ex-

[j] Perrone, Prælect. Theolog. t. i. p. 229.

[k] Ibid.

[l] Especial reference is here intended to the too prevalent practice of Romish writers in producing evidence for their tenets from spurious and modern writings, falsely ascribed to the Fathers. The writer had occasion to enter on this subject, in his "Letters to Dr. Wiseman," 1841, 1842.

amine and refute the multitudinous proofs adduced by Romanists for their tenets, from the writings of the Fathers. Some persons have even relinquished it in despair. It would perhaps have been impossible to disabuse the minds of a large part of the community of the impression, that the strength of the Romish argument lies in antiquity, if Romanism had remained true to itself. Had its adherents only consistently maintained their old position, it might have been difficult to produce any material effects, even by occasional demonstrations of the very slight grounds on which their appeal to apostolical antiquity rests. But it will in future be a much easier task to demonstrate the futility of that appeal. It needs no longer any laborious collation of passages from the Fathers. The case is now open to the plainest comprehension. Their writers have confessed it. Perrone and Trévern have felt that Christian antiquity is not, as a whole, perfectly favourable to Romish tenets—that it had more than one aspect. But it remained for Möhler, De Maistre, Newman, and the other advocates of the "Theory of Development," to deal a mortal blow at the theory of Tradition which we have been hitherto considering.

What is the general character of the doctrine of Development? It is this: Sedulously bent on vindicating the Romish tenets, and most fully sensible that those tenets were unknown to the primitive Church, it commences its task by maintaining, that from the very nature of the case, it was *impossible* that those tenets could have been taught and believed in the Church during the earliest ages; that it is of the essence of great ideas to be only slowly and gradually comprehended; that in point of fact it is

quite evident, that the peculiar doctrines of Romanism were not generally held in the first ages. Such is, in general, the theory of development, which will in future relieve us from much trouble in demonstrating the novelty of Romanism.

14. Let us now observe how this theory applies to various doctrines in controversy between Romanism and the Reformation; and first, let us see its operation on the Papal Supremacy, which is the key of the whole.

We have already seen, that Roman Catholic authors are generally most positive in their assurances, that the Papal Supremacy was believed and acted on from the *very beginning*. According to them, nothing can be more clear than the exercise of this power in all ages: it is an apostolical tradition; which is testified by Ignatius, Clement, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and by all the other writers of the first three centuries.

Now then let us hear on the other side the writers on Development. First, Möhler:—

This ingenious and learned writer, who is generally regarded as the ablest amongst the modern Roman Catholic divines, says, in reference to the Roman Supremacy, "I was for a long time in doubt whether the Primacy [of Rome] was of the essence of the Catholic Church; I was even disposed to deny it; for the organic union of all the parts in one whole, which the idea of the Catholic Church requires, and which she is, appeared to be completely attained by the unity of the Episcopate, such as we have expounded it hitherto: on the other side, *it is evident that the history of the first three centuries is not sufficiently rich in materials to remove all our doubts on*

*this point*[m]." This is much less strong than what follows in a page or two, where this learned author makes some remarks on the celebrated texts, Matt. xvi. 18, and John xxi. 15—17, of which, together with the other texts adduced by Romanists in proof of the Papal Supremacy, he says, that "there is no need to give to them an interpretation different from that of the holy Fathers[n]" (evidently referring to the ordinary interpretations of Roman Catholic writers); the real meaning of these passages, according to Möhler, affording "no direct proof" of the primacy of St. Peter. This primacy, however, was proved, it seems, by St. Peter's *actions*. But now comes the passage to which I wish to draw particular attention.

"Whilst the Apostles were dispersed, St. Peter could not exercise his primacy, and we can never believe that it was necessary for him to do so, even if he had been authorized. Whilst Christianity was engaged in strengthening itself in various communities, and whilst the union of the different Churches was only at the earlier stages of its organization, *the primacy of one Church and of its bishop absolutely could not manifest itself*. For if we would consider the Primate in a right point of view, we should, as we have said, represent him to ourselves as the personified reflection of the unity of the whole Church; but it was not possible that the unity of the whole Church, in contemplating itself, should become objective, and, as a product of that Church, present itself as a personal image, before it had penetrated all its members: those, then, who desire to have

[m] Möhler, L'Unité de l'Eglise, p. 221. [n] P. 223.

undeniable historical proofs in favour of the Primacy, before that epoch which we have above noticed, as that in which the unity of the Church displayed itself in all its vigour (the time of St. Cyprian), ought to know, that they require what is unfitting; *since it is not possible, according to the laws of a true development.* It may be said of those who imagine that they have found it established before this epoch, that the trouble they have given themselves has been fruitless, and that their pretensions cannot be sustained [o]. The Primacy, like every property of Christianity, ought not to be considered as a dead idea, but as living and proceeding from life. . . . Necessities must make themselves felt; these necessities show themselves in history as facts; and it is from these facts that the idea immediately educes itself [p]."

15. Let us now come to the statements of the author of the "Essay on Development," on the question of the Papal Supremacy. In the first place, he rejects the rule of Vincentius Lirinensis, which teaches us to receive what has been taught at all times, in all places, and by all the Fathers; this rule, as well as the principle of the *Disciplina arcani*, being inadequate, in his opinion, in consequence of the variations or contradictions of the early writers. This, of course, subverts at once the whole argument and principle of such writers as Wiseman, Milner, Trévern, Bossuet, &c. After this, he comes to the "evidence which is adducible, in the first five centuries, on behalf of the Supremacy of the Holy See [q]," which (as he intimates, without any dissent from the notion)

[o] Möhler, Unité de l'Eglise, p. 224.

[p] P. 225.

[q] Essay on Development, p. 165.

is considered by Protestants to be characterized by "dimness and indistinctness," as regards its Ante-Nicene portion. The question which he suggests in reference to the Papal Supremacy is, "whether there was not from the first a certain element at work, or in existence, which, for some reason or other, *did not at once show itself upon the surface of ecclesiastical affairs*, and of which the events of the *fourth* century are the development[r]." He then remarks, that, "for instance, it is true St. Ignatius is silent, in his Epistles, on the subject of the Pope's authority"—and why? "While Apostles were on earth, there was need neither of Bishops nor Pope; their power was dormant, or exercised by Apostles. *In course of time*, first the power of the Bishop awoke, and then the power of the Pope. . . . St. Peter's prerogative would remain a mere letter, till the complication of ecclesiastical matters became the cause of ascertaining it. While Christians were of one heart and one soul, it would be suspended: love dispenses with laws. . . The *regalia Petri* might sleep, as the power of a Chancellor [in a University] has slept; not as an obsolete,—for *it never had been operative*,—but as a mysterious privilege, *which was not understood;* as an unfulfilled prophecy. . .

"When the Church, then, was thrown upon her own resources, first local disturbances gave rise to Bishops, and next œcumenical disturbances *gave rise to Popes;* and whether communion with the Pope was necessary for catholicity, would not, and could not be debated, till a suspension of that communion had actually occurred . . . It is a less difficulty *that*

[r] Essay on Development, p. 165.

*the Papal Supremacy was not formally acknowledged in the second century*, than that there was no formal acknowledgment of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, till the fourth[s]."

This writer adds, that during the persecutions, the imperial power "availed for keeping back the power of the Papacy." The "Papacy" "*began to form*" as soon as persecution ceased. This "monarchical power" of the Church "*rose* when the Empire became Christian," and it was "natural also that further developments of that power should take place when that Empire fell." He, in short, admits without reluctance the force of Barrow's reasoning, which is directed to show, that in primitive times, the Papal Supremacy did not and could not exist[t]! The conclusion at which he arrives, on a survey of primitive times, is, that "supposing there be otherwise good reason for saying, that the Papal Supremacy is part of Christianity, there is nothing in the early history of the Church to *contradict* it[u]." To such a conclusion we may readily accede: it is perfectly satisfactory to find the advocates of the Papacy obliged at length to admit the force of Barrow's reasoning, and to relinquish the argument from Christian antiquity.

16. The whole case is now sufficiently clear and intelligible: the Papal Supremacy could not have developed itself before *the fourth century*, and consequently, we are not to look for any clear and distinct evidences of its exercise and reception in the first ages of Christianity: so that all those who have confidently asserted that the Papal Supremacy was an

[s] Essay on Development, p. 166, 167.

[t] P. 168, 169.

[u] P. 170.

apostolical tradition, believed and acted on at all times in the Church, have been in error. In other words, it is admitted, that there is no clear and convincing evidence from tradition for the Papal Supremacy. We have this established, not merely by our own divines, but by the ablest modern advocates of Romanism.

It is not possible to calculate exactly how far such a view as this may be generally acceptable to those Roman Catholics, whose received opinions and theories it entirely demolishes; but one point at least is sufficiently clear: the "Theory of Development" has secured for those who do not receive the doctrine of the Papal Supremacy, whether they be Greeks or adherents of the Reformation, the most invaluable concessions. The theory of development may or may not be well founded; but it has led to the admission of the all-important *fact*, that the Papal Supremacy did not exist in the earliest ages, and has no effective support from their records. We accept the admission of this *fact* with gratitude, while we need not feel anxious about the "theory" which has elicited it, since it is avowedly a *mere* "theory." We shall see more of the results of this "theory" presently, and it will be found to have arguments in store, which are calculated to give a very new complexion to controversy between Romanists and Protestants. But at present we accept the important admission thus elicited.

17. Let us, under the guidance of "the Theory of Development," proceed to examine some other points controverted between Romanists and the Reformation.

One of the tests which the Essayist applies to de-

velopments of Christianity, with a view to discriminate real developments from corruptions of doctrine, is that of "early anticipation." When an idea is developing, he remarks, "instances of such a process, though vague and isolated, may occur from the very first, though a lapse of time be necessary to bring it to perfection; . . . it is in no wise strange that here and there definite specimens should very early occur, which in the historical course are not found till a late day[v]." If, then, "the so-called Catholic doctrines and practices are true and legitimate developments, we may expect to find traces of them in the first centuries. And this I conceive to be the case: the records indeed of those times are scanty . . . yet it appears from what remains, that the atmosphere of the Church was, as it were, charged with them from the first, and delivered itself of them from time to time, in this way or that, in various places and persons[w]."

The writer in this place speaks of Roman Catholic tenets *in general;* and as a specimen of what he would say, he directs particular attention to relics, the worship of saints and angels, the merit of virginity, the "prerogatives of St. Mary." To how many other points of Roman doctrine this principle is to be applied, seems uncertain. However, the general nature of the statement leads to the inference that it is intended to apply to the majority, at least, of those points.

Now the results at which we arrive by the aid of this discriminative test, are as follows: The Roman Catholic tenets in question were not *generally* taught or held in the primitive ages: whatever casual notices

[v] Newman, Essay on Development, p. 77. [w] P. 369.

of them may be found in the records of those ages, are mere *anticipations*, on the part of certain individuals, of the doctrine which was in after-ages developed in the Church at large. These Roman Catholic tenets were not communicated to the Church by the Apostles, but were discovered in later times. Thus, for instance, the *worship of relics* was not enjoined by the Apostles, but was, according to the Essayist, a consequence of the doctrine of the Resurrection taught by them; and there are various instances[x] of such worship in the primitive ages; *i. e. anticipations*, on the part of individuals, of the generally received doctrine of later times. From the worship of relics, it seems, the Christians proceeded to the doctrine of the *intercession of saints*[y], *i. e.* the former was *prior*, in order of time, to the latter. The intercession of saints, it appears, developed afterwards into the *worship of saints*[z], though Justin Martyr had by anticipation taught the worship of angels[a]. The "*special prerogatives of St. Mary*" come next. "As is well known, they were not fully recognized in the Catholic ritual till a late date, but they were not a new thing in the Church, or strange to her earlier teachers[b]." It is alleged, that Justin Martyr, Irenæus, and others of the early writers, have noticed some of these prerogatives, *i. e.* by way of *anticipation*[c]; the doctrine itself being not generally received by the Church till a later period.

Now all this is very clear and intelligible: it entirely subverts the notion that the Roman Catholic doctrines and practices have been those of the

[x] Essay, p. 370—374.
[y] P. 374, 375.
[z] P. 376.
[a] P. 377.
[b] P. 384.
[c] P. 385—387.

Universal Church from the beginning; or that they were communicated to her by our Lord or His Apostles. This is really bringing out our case very satisfactorily. The Essayist cannot of course allege that the evidence adduced by him in any of these cases, is sufficient to prove that there was in the early Church a *general* agreement on the doctrines in question. This would show that they *had* been developed—that they were received into the general doctrine of the Church. His position and argument is, that they had been occasionally *anticipated* in early times, before they were actually developed.

But we must trace out some more of the bearings of the theory of development on Romanism.

We learn, then, that "in the course of the fourth century, two movements or developments spread over the face of Christendom, with a rapidity characteristic of the Church; the one ascetic, the other ritual or ceremonial[d]." The reference here is to Monasticism, and to certain peculiar rites of the Roman Church, the latter of which Mr. Newman acknowledges to be "all of Pagan origin[e]." That is to say, none of them are derived from apostolical teaching. "The introduction of *images* was still later" than the "fifth century[f];" it was, in fact, "a development of the *eighth*" century[g]." "The Arian and Monophysite errors . . . became the natural introduction of the cultus sanctorum[h]," *i. e.* of *the worship of saints and angels*. These errors arose in the fourth and fifth centuries; so that the worship of saints and angels founded on them can have no pretence to any very

[d] Essay, p. 359.
[e] P. 360.
[f] P. 362.
[g] Ibid.
[h] P. 401.

early origin. The writer referred to, derives them from principles laid down by Athanasius and Augustine, the latter of whom lived in the fifth century. "There was in the first ages," he says, "no public and ecclesiastical recognition of the place which St. Mary holds in the economy of grace; this was reserved for the *fifth* century[i];" though he thinks that "the spontaneous or traditional feeling of Christians" had *anticipated* the actual development by the Church at large.

Again, the doctrine of the guilt of post-baptismal sin, according to this writer, led gradually to the doctrine of Purgatory. "Thus we see how, as time went on, the doctrine of Purgatory was opened upon the apprehension of the Church, as a portion or form of penance due for sins committed after baptism. And thus the belief in this doctrine and the practice of infant baptism, would grow into general reception together[j]." So that the doctrine of Purgatory was not taught by the Apostles, or generally received at first, but was gradually reasoned out.

18. Now having arrived at this point in our inquiry, we may pause for a moment, and contemplate the leading facts which have been brought before us. Romanism,—*i. e.* the theology of the Church of Rome, claims acceptance especially and principally on the ground of its *consistency;* such consistency affording a strong presumption in favour of its truth. But when the foundations of this system are actually examined, its insecurity becomes immediately perceptible, from the striking contradictions of its adherents. If Romanism were an essentially true system, it could not have deprived itself of the power of esta-

[i] Essay, p. 407. [j] P. 417.

blishing the truth of Christianity, by the fundamental principles which it has laid down in controversy with Protestants; nor could it assert, that all its peculiar doctrines have descended without any alteration or change in the Universal Church, even from the Apostles themselves; and afterwards demonstrate that those very doctrines *did not exist* in the earliest ages, but were the growth of times long subsequent. It could not, as it does, quote series of passages from the Fathers, and maintain triumphantly that those quotations express the sense of the Universal Church from the beginning; and then assure us, that they are mere individual anticipations of the doctrine which was subsequently developed. If the Invocation of saints, the worship of relics, purgatory, the Papal Supremacy, and such like doctrines and practices, are Christian and Catholic, and binding on all believers, how is it that their advocates refute each other's testimony? Which are we to believe? Can it be said that either party is inferior to the other in learning, in candour, or in zeal for the cause of Romanism? Bellarmine, and Bossuet, and Wiseman, are at least as credible as Möhler and Newman. To what conclusion then can we arrive but this—that the peculiar doctrines of Romanism are false, and incapable of any legitimate proof? We can readily admit that the truth of religious tenets may be established by *different* modes of argument; but when those modes become wholly destructive of each other, and yet are respectively sustained by persons of equal learning and credit, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion, that their contradictions arise from the want of truth and reasonableness in the tenets which are defended. Is it not wonderful, that while

the acceptance of the peculiarities of Romanism is urged as an essential condition to salvation, their advocates are unable to agree on this simple question, whether those peculiarities were taught by the Apostles, or whether they were invented many ages after the time of the Apostles? Now contrast this with the position taken up at the Reformation by the opponents of Romanism,—by men, who while deeply penetrated with a sense of the growing corruption of the religious system then prevalent, were rooted in their belief of the perfect truth and the Divine character of the religion taught by our blessed Lord and His Apostles. It is true, then, that the adherents of the Reformation have differed amongst themselves, in some respects, as regards their argument against Romanism. The testimony of the Fathers has been by some regarded as more favourable to Rome than it has been by others. Some of them have, we know, adopted systems which are not in accordance with the general voice of Christian antiquity; and therefore we can at once see a reason for the unfavourable construction which they have sometimes given to its records. But, setting aside these differences in matters of detail, there are at least two leading principles which they have always maintained. The first is, that Romanism has no foundation in Scripture. The second, that it was not taught orally by the Apostles, and handed down by unwritten tradition. This is the ground which has been stedfastly and consistently maintained.

And what has been the defence of Romanism? In the first place, unable to substantiate its claims from Scripture, it falls back on the theory of an unwritten tradition derived from the Apostles; and the

writings of the Fathers become its refuge. In the hurry of the emergency, every thing is pressed into its service. Forgeries, spurious and apocryphal writings, the fraudulent compositions of heretics and impostors, are mingled with the genuine writings of the holy Fathers. But, after a time, it becomes evident that antiquity is insufficient to establish the Romish tenets; and we forthwith find their advocates asserting without scruple or hesitation, that those tenets could not have existed in the apostolic age, or till some centuries later—that such articles of doctrine were only *intended* to be developed in the course of ages.

Judging from the simple facts of the case, there can be, I think, very little doubt, on which side the truth lies.

19. But to revert to the theory of development. There is one very striking statement made by the Essayist, which is calculated to throw considerable light on the questions in debate between Romanism and the Reformation.

The developments of the Roman doctrine are, according to him, derived *from the early heresies and from paganism;* and not from apostolic tradition. I do not know how far such an admission is likely to meet general approbation in the communion to which he has attached himself, even with the qualifications which he annexes to it. It is doubtless impossible not to applaud the candour of this admission, even while we may wonder that it was made at the very moment when the writer was about to enter the Roman communion.

According to his admission, the *heresy of Montanus* is, "in its whole system," a "remarkable *anticipation*

or presage of developments which soon began to show themselves in the Church, though they were not perfected for centuries after. Its rigid maintenance of the original creed, yet its admission of a development, at least in the ritual, has just been instanced in the person of Tertullian. Equally Catholic in their principle, whether in fact or anticipation, were most of the other peculiarities of Montanism: its rigorous fasts, its visions, its commendation of celibacy and martyrdom, its contempt of temporal goods, its penitential discipline, and its *centre of unity*. The doctrinal determinations and ecclesiastical usages of *the middle ages* are *the true fulfilment* of its self-willed and abortive attempts at precipitating the growth of the Church . . . These are specimens of the raw material, as it may be called, which, whether as found in individual Fathers within the pale of the Church, or in heretics external to it, she had the power, by means of the continuity and firmness of her principles, to convert to her own uses. She alone has succeeded in thus rejecting evil without sacrificing the good, and in holding together in one, things which in all other schools are incompatible. Gnostic or Platonic words are found in the inspired theology of St. John. Unitarian writers trace the doctrine of our Lord's Divinity to the Platonists; Gibbon, the idea of the Incarnation to the Gnostics. The Gnostics, too, seem first to have systematically directed the intellect upon matters of faith; and the very term 'Gnostic,' has been taken by Clement to express his perfect Christian. And, though Ascetics existed from the beginning, the notion of a religion higher than the Christianity of the many, was first prominently brought forward by the Gnostics, Montanists, Novatians, and Manichees.

And while the *prophets* of the Montanists prefigure the Church's *doctors*, and their inspiration her *infallibility*, and their *revelations* her *developments*, and the heresiarch himself is the unsightly *anticipation* of St. Francis, in Novatian again we discern the aspiration of nature after such creations of grace as St. Benedict or St. Bruno[k]."

He also traces many of the rites of the Church to Paganism. "The use," he says, "of temples, and these dedicated to particular saints, and ornamented on occasion with branches of trees; incense, lamps, and candles; votive offerings on recovery from illness; holy water; asylums; holydays and seasons, use of calendars, processions; blessings on the fields; sacerdotal vestments, the tonsure, the ring in marriage, turning to the East, images at a later date, perhaps the ecclesiastical chant, and the Kyrie Eleison, are all of Pagan origin, and sanctified by their adoption into the Church[l]."

In these remarkable passages we have a full and formal admission, that the idea of the Roman system is, to a very great extent, derived from *Paganism* and *Heresy!* The natural inference from such an admission is indeed sought to be evaded by the assertion, that whatever of superstition and error existed in the original, has been lost in the copy; and that at all events, Protestants themselves continue to retain some rites of Pagan origin. I cannot think that such assertions avail materially to dispel the suspicion which must naturally arise, on our being informed, that the Romish system is not of apostolical antiquity; that it was not known to the Church or received by

[k] Newman, Essay on Development, p. 351, 352. [l] P. 359.

her during the primitive ages, but that it was in after-times gradually derived from Heresy and Paganism! Of course we have no right to conclude at once, from this mere fact, that Romanism is a corruption of Christianity. It may be, that sufficient care has been taken to guard against heathen and heretical notions or practices; but certainly the case, as stated by Mr. Newman, is one which wears a most suspicious appearance, and which demands the very strongest and clearest evidences of innocence, before it can be allowed to be free from imputations most unfavourable to the character of Romanism as a form of Christianity. With reference to the assertion that some rites used by those who reject Romanism are equally derived from Paganism, we have merely to say, that there is obviously no comparison between such mere ceremonies as the use of branches of trees in churches, calendars, and the ring in marriage, which no one supposes to be any thing more than forms; and such things as the worship of saints, and angels, and images; and the innumerable superstitions connected with them.

The great and essential difference between Romanism and the Reformation, as regards any forms or rites borrowed originally from heathenism, is this: the former has permitted her doctrines and worship to be modified by heathen ideas: the latter has nothing in common with heathenism, but a few ceremonial forms which no one considers to be essential to worship, or to be connected with doctrine.

In the next chapter it will be shown, that the "Essay on Development" establishes, in the most decisive manner, the connexion of religious ideas between Romanism and Polytheism.

20. There is another, and a very important fact brought out by Mr. Newman, in the course of his work. It is this—that the development of Roman Catholic doctrine has not proceeded from Scripture understood in its plain and literal sense, but in a *mystical* sense. Heresy, according to him, has found support in the literal interpretation of Scripture; while orthodoxy has invariably rested its proof of doctrines on the mystical meaning of passages[m]. "This has," he says, "been the doctrine of all ages of the Church, as is shown by the disinclination of her teachers to confine themselves to the mere literal interpretation of Scripture. Her most subtle and powerful method of *proof*, whether in ancient or modern times, is the mystical sense . . . Thus Bellarmine defends monastic celibacy by our Lord's words in Matthew xix.; and refers to 'we went through fire and water,' &c. in the Psalm, as an argument for Purgatory; and these, as is plain, are but specimens of a rule. Now on turning to primitive controversy, we find this method of interpretation to be the very basis of the proof of the Catholic doctrine of the Trinity. Whether we betake ourselves to the Ante-Nicene writers or the Nicene, certain texts will meet us which do not obviously refer to that doctrine, yet are put forward as palmary proofs of it. Such are in respect of our Lord's Divinity. 'My heart is inditing of a good matter,' or 'has burst with a good word.' . . . On the other hand, the school of Antioch, which adopted the literal interpretation, was the very metropolis of heresy[n]."

It may be a very unreasonable and absurd infer-

[m] Essay on Development, p. 282, &c., 290, 319. [n] P. 323, 324.

ence from all this; but it is an inference which will, I think, be unavoidable in the case of almost every one who hears it; that Scripture, in its literal meaning, is unfavourable to the tenets of Romanism at least. Whether it be so to the cause of orthodoxy is another question: I presume that every one who knows any thing of the controversial writings of the Fathers, or of the holy Scriptures, will recollect that the great doctrines of Christianity possess proofs which do not depend on mere mystical interpretations of Scripture; and that the defenders of the truth have always prominently put forward such proofs. But it is clear, from Mr. Newman's argument, that he considers the Roman developments to depend on mystical interpretations of Scripture. And this certainly throws considerable light on the whole question. It is an additional link in the chain of evidence. It furnishes a new evidence of the same consciousness which has driven the controversialists of the Roman Church for three centuries into the denial of the perfection of Scripture, as a rule of faith—which has obliged them to devise the doctrine of an unwritten tradition supplementary to Scripture. Repelled at length from this position, they take shelter in the mystic interpretation of Scripture, by means of which, of course, the Scripture can be made to speak any language that they please; and what is more, to produce any tenets or principles which Heresy or Fanaticism may wish to gather from it.

21. The principles of the Essayist may here be contrasted with those of another member of the Roman communion; and a comparison of the two will afford a striking illustration of *the kind of unity in the most essential principles*, which prevails in that

communion; while it will also prove, that if Romanism is founded only on the mystical interpretation of Scripture, it is without any sufficient foundation.

"The groundwork of all the science of interpretation," says Dr. Wiseman, "is exceedingly simple, if we consider the object to be attained. Every one will agree, that when we read any book or hear any discourse, our object is to understand what was passing in the author's mind when he wrote or spoke those passages . . . The object of all human intercourse, pursuant to the established laws of social communication, is to transpose into other minds the same feelings and ideas that exist in one; . . . the object of any person who addresses others, either in writing or in speech, is to convey, *as clearly as possible*, his meaning to their minds . . . The true rule of interpretation, therefore, is to know what must have been the only meaning which the actual hearers who were alive and present at the time the words were addressed to them, would have put on any expressions; and if we find that to be a certain definite signification, and the only one which *could* have been given, it is clear that it must be the true one[o] . . . I contend that *the obvious rule is to take words literally, unless a necessity be proved for taking them figuratively;* and I wish to know how such a rule would stand before those who deny the divinity of Christ, that we are not allowed to take any passage literally, unless a necessity for it be first demonstrated[p] . . . When the explicit, plain, and *literal* con-

[o] Wiseman, Lectures on the Doctrines and Practices of the Cath. Church, vol. i. p. 137, 138.

[p] P. 175.

struction of the words is that which we adopt, it becomes the task of those who maintain us to be wrong, and say that the words 'this is my body,' did not mean that it was the body of Christ, but only its symbol—I contend, it becomes their duty to prove their figurative interpretation[q]."

22. Thus we have the principle of literal interpretation supported by Dr. Wiseman, while Mr. Newman denounces it as heretical; and yet the former writer is evidently under the impression, that he is advocating a principle perfectly in accordance with the principles of his Church[r]. It has indeed been very usual with Romish controversialists to call on their opponents for clear proofs of their tenets from the language of Scripture. Mr. Newman's principle, however, renders the task of opposing the doctrines of Romanism and even those of the Catholic faith a very easy one. There can be little difficulty in proving whatever we may wish from Scripture, if its plain and literal sense is to be set aside, and we are at liberty to *prefer* mystic and figurative interpretations. In fact, this system is only fully developed by

[q] Wiseman, Letters, &c., vol. i. p. 178.

[r] It is also expressly asserted by Bellarmine, as follows: "Convenit inter nos et adversarios, ex solo literali sensu peti debere argumenta efficacia; nam eum sensum, qui ex verbis immediate colligitur, certum est, sensum esse Spiritus Sancti. At sensus mystici et spirituales varii sunt, et licet ædificent, cum non sunt contra fidem aut bonos mores, tamen non semper constat, an sint a Spiritu Sancto intenti. Quocirca B. Augustinus in Epist. 48 ad Vincentium merito ridet Donatistas, qui ex illis verbis mystice explicatis: 'Indica mihi ubi pascas, ubi cubes in meridie,' colligebant Ecclesiam Christi in sola Africa remansisse. Hieronymus quoque in Commentario, cap. 13 Matthæi, docet, fidei dogmata ex mysticis sensibus non posse efficaciter confirmari." De Verbo Dei Scripto et non Scripto, lib. iii. c. 3.

such writers as Strauss or Bruno Bauer, to whom the whole of Revelation, even the creation, and the existence of Christ, becomes a mythus. And thus again we find the principle of Rationalism unexpectedly involved in the theories of development.

So far, the Reformation does not seem to have much reason to apprehend material injury to its cause, from the publication of theories of development. We would only ask of their authors to be as explicit as the Essayist has been, and to permit us to see as plainly as he has done, the results to which they would lead us.

23. But there is another point which must not be omitted. It has been a common argument of Romanists against the Reformation, that there were differences of opinion amongst its promoters—that different confessions of faith were put forth—and that as time went on, doctrines gradually changed. Bossuet has bestowed much ingenuity and research in tracing the "Variations of the Protestant Church," which he contrasts with the immoveable fixedness of the Roman Catholic faith.

"When," he says, "we see amongst Christians variations in the exposition of faith, we always regard them as a sign of falsehood, and want of consecutiveness in the doctrine put forth. Faith speaks simply: the Holy Ghost diffuses pure light, and the truths which He teaches have ever a *uniform* language . . . This was one of the grounds on which the ancient doctors so much condemned the Arians, who continually published new confessions of faith without ever being able to settle themselves."

"But while heresies, ever variable, are inconsistent with themselves, and continually introduce new

rules, that is to say, new creeds into the Church, Tertullian saith, 'The rule of faith is unchangeable and irreformable' (De Virg. Vel. i.); that is, the Church, which professes to say and to teach only what she has received, never varies; and on the contrary, heresy, which began by innovation, continually innovates, and never changes its nature. Hence St. Chrysostom, treating on this precept of the Apostles, 'Avoid profane novelties in your discourse,' has made this reflexion, 'Avoid novelties in your discourses, for matters do not remain so; one novelty produces another, and we wander without end when we have once begun to wander.' Two circumstances cause this disorder in heresies; one is taken from the nature of the human mind, which, when it has once tasted the attraction of novelty, never ceases to seek with an inordinate appetite this deceitful sweetness; the other is derived from the difference of God's actions from those of men. The Catholic truth coming from God, has its perfection at first: heresy, a feeble production of the human mind, cannot build itself up except by ill assorted pieces[s].'" On these principles Bossuet undertakes to demonstrate to the Protestants the falsehood of their doctrine, from their continual variations, and from the different modes in which they have explained their doctrines. But "the Theory of Development," now put forward by the advocates of Romanism, wholly removes the force of this argument; for it affirms that variation, and change, and contradiction to a certain extent, have been always the accompaniments of the progress of Catholic doctrine. The maxim of those who maintain the theory of development is—"To live is to

[s] Bossuet, Variations des Eglises Protestantes, Preface.

change, and to be perfect is to have changed often[t]." Consequently the mere fact of variations amongst the adherents of the Reformation is, according to this theory, rather a sign of spiritual life; and affords not the slightest presumption against the truth of their doctrine.

24. The theory of development will furnish another very convenient argument *ad hominem*, when individuals of no great learning find themselves pressed by Romanists, with arguments from the writings of the Fathers, on any point of doctrine or discipline. It is now easy to answer, that according to the laws of development as laid down by Möhler, Newman, &c., the early writers cannot be supposed to have any particular authority in such questions, because the truth was only gradually discovered; and therefore believers in the present day are more likely than those of the early ages to determine aright on such questions. Doubtless this will save a great deal of time, and will obviate the necessity for any examination of arguments which may be alleged from Antiquity.

25. The same argument, of course, may be employed with advantage against any Romanist, who urges that any article of the Christian faith, or the Canon of Scripture, must be received simply on the authoritative decisions of the Church of the first four or five centuries. If the Church did not comprehend the idea of Christianity, except imperfectly, her infallibility is at an end at once: not another word need be said on the subject. The objections, too, which have been made to some expressions of Luther, Calvin, and others, who sometimes spoke slightingly of the

[t] Essay on Development, p. 39.

Fathers, or of some of their opinions, are at once dissolved by the theory of development; because on this theory, it is to be supposed necessarily, that Luther, Calvin, and Zuinglius, comprehended the idea of Christianity more perfectly than Augustine or Chrysostom.

We have now seen what kind of advantage the cause of Romanism is likely to gain from this theory.

26. But there is one curious question connected with this subject which it may be well to consider here. Does the doctrine of development furnish any presumption in favour of the idea of a Reformation, as an essential element in God's government of the Church? Is there, from this doctrine, any reasonable probability, that the welfare of the Church was to be promoted by a Reformation, such as the Reformation actually was, *i. e.* an opposition to rooted and prevalent tenets and practices?

If we are to have "theories" of this kind obtruded on the Church, it may be just as well to examine them, and ascertain what they lead to. It is evident that those writers who have put forth the theory of development, are very imperfectly acquainted with its real character and tendencies. If they had been so, they could not have assumed, as they have uniformly done, that developments must always be *positive*. They appear to have absolutely no conception of any development, which is not an addition to the existing body of positive doctrine and practice. Their notion of development is merely that of a process which adds the positive doctrines of Purgatory, Transubstantiation, Worship of Images, of Saints, and of the Virgin, and the Papal Supremacy, to the original belief of the Church.

Now this is obviously a very imperfect view. It is evident at once, that Revelation includes negative articles as well as positive, *i. e.* if it teaches certain truths, it equally condemns certain errors. Almost every condemnation of heresies in the Councils of the Church, has been based on such negative developments. The Holy Scripture itself furnishes as many examples of condemnation of errors, as it does of statements of truth. Hence it is certain that the development of doctrine in the Church, supposing it to progress continually in all ages, must be not only positive but negative, *i. e.* it must reject some doctrines and tenets, while it establishes others.

Scripture itself teaches us, and the advocates of the theory of development admit, that Christians are not exempt from all liability to error in their deductions from Scripture, or in their reasonings on religious subjects; so that developments of *negative articles of doctrine* may be frequently requisite, in order to oppose such false and corrupt developments of Christianity. This is *Reformation*, when it seeks to correct evils existing in the communion of the Church itself.

Now the theory of development is, by its advocates, founded in part on analogies derived from the material and moral world. It is compared, amongst other things, to the progress of human society, which is continually developing new ideas, and gradually attaining to greater perfection in various ways. But "the march of intellect" and of civilization, is liable to great but necessary interruptions. Civilization has often for a time been overborne, with ultimate benefit to the world, by the invasion of stern and uncivilized but virtuous nations: philosophy was for a time

prostrated by the preaching of the Gospel. Like storms in the natural world, revolutions and the destruction of civilization and refinement are at times the necessary conditions of future progress. The moral atmosphere is at times purged by such severe and even terrible, but salutary processes. And therefore we might reason from analogy, that such processes are at times necessary to the preservation of Christianity—necessary to dispel growing corruptions, and to enable the process of development to proceed to its legitimate objects.

That such corruptions *will* take place in the development of the idea of Christianity, we may infer from the analogy which the Essayist himself has traced between it, and the earlier dispensations of God. "The whole Bible," according to Mr. Newman, "is written on the principle of development. As the revelation proceeds it is ever new, yet ever old[u]." "The whole truth or large portions of it are told at once, yet only in their rudiments, or in miniature, and they are expanded and finished in the parts as the course of revelation proceeds." In short, the whole history of God's dispensations with man, is a continual process of development of certain great ideas originally revealed by God. Now then let us examine this process of development in its various parts, and see whether it does not confirm what has been already inferred from the analogy of the natural and moral world. Let me here quote from an eminent Romish divine[v]. "A promise of redemption was the first good word spoken to man by God, after his original sentence of punishment . . . But how

[u] Essay on Development, p. 103.

[v] Wiseman, Lectures, vol. i. p. 92—97.

soon were all these divine promises *disfigured and corrupted;* how soon was their true purport clean forgotten; how completely did they degenerate into the fond inventions of men, and fall into the wicked subserviency of all their worst desires!"

"Hence God, in order to prevent the human race from losing the benefits of His blessing, chose out of all the nations of the earth, one people whom He made the keeper of this great deposit . . . And we see that His action upon this body was not detailed upon each individual, but through a more select order of men, constituting a graduated hierarchy."

Dr. Wiseman proceeds to remark, that the New Testament completely links the Mosaic to the Christian dispensation; and that in the prophecies "the Church is never otherwise described, than as the revival, extension, and perfection of the former state." The former or Mosaic Church was, in fact, a type of the Christian; and "it is evident then, that there must be *counterparts* in the two dispensations, *analogies* and resemblances, clearly showing ours to be the perfecting and filling up of the other's outline."

Undoubtedly, the whole argument establishes the writer's belief, that the Christian dispensation was to present the counterpart of the Mosaic, in very many respects. What then was one great feature of the Mosaic dispensation? The same learned writer shall answer. "You will say, with all the precautions which His providence took to secure the safe transmission of His promises, see how fearfully they of old did fall from Him, and forget all that He had taught them . . . Now, far from there being any objection in this to what I have hitherto said, it seems

to me rather a confirmation thereof. *Much falling off there often was—a total loss never.*"

If then the Jewish dispensation was to be the counterpart of the Christian, it may be inferred that the same characters of corruption, falling away, idolatry, will be found in *both;* and if the continuity and development of the idea of revelation was accomplished in the one case, notwithstanding long-continued apostasies, idolatry, polytheism, the same may be anticipated in the other. But there is one great difference between these dispensations: in the former, prophets or inspired teachers were sent by God to protest against and to reform prevalent corruptions: in the latter, there have been no such teachers; consequently it is to be expected that the Reformation of abuses and idolatries, which (as we have seen) are to be expected, will, in the Christian dispensation, be effected by ordinary teachers, or by the protest of pious and holy individuals who are not teachers. We know that in the elder dispensation, Reformations were effected in many cases by Princes, such as Jehu, Hezekiah, Josiah; and the analogy pointed out by the writers referred to above, renders it probable that at some period, Christianity would be reformed by aid of temporal Sovereigns. There can therefore be no *à priori* argument against the interference of Princes in the work of the Reformation.

Such are some of the conclusions to which the "Theory of Development" has brought us—conclusions, not "*absolutely fatal*[w]," either to "the pretensions of 'high Church' Anglican theology," to the cause of the Reformation in general, or even to Protestantism in its most latitudinarian form[x]. It seems

[w] Ward, Ideal, p. 553.

[x] Mr. Ward observes, in re-

to me, that on the contrary, this theory is calculated to be of eminent service to all opponents of the Church of Rome, in abbreviating controversy, by disposing of all that is calculated to be perplexing to unlearned persons. It furnishes simple and convincing proofs that Romanism is not derived from any pretended apostolical tradition—that it was not handed down by any *disciplina arcani*—that it did not prevail in the primitive Church—that it was gradually reasoned out, from principles supplied by Paganism and Heresy—that it is inconsistent with the plain and literal meaning of Scripture. These are facts which cannot fail to make their due impression on every rational and enquiring mind; and they receive a new force and cogency from the analogies on which the theory is based, which imply that an extensive corruption may be expected to arise in Christianity, and that a Reformation, such as has taken place, was to be anticipated.

But we have not yet traced out all the windings of this accommodating theory. We have seen that it is equally favourable to Rationalism, to Dissent, to the Reformation, and to Protestantism. There are some other facts which will bring out its character in a yet more striking way; and the exposition of these will furnish the subject of the next three chapters.

ference to the alleged identity of the principle of development with that of Rationalism: "In one point they agree, and only in one—in clashing with the principles of Conservatism." Ideal, p. 553. Thus we find the principle of religious "conservatism" assailed by the very writer, who contends so earnestly for the "high sacredness of *hereditary* religion," that he would not even permit the faith of the heathen in their false gods to be assailed; and would, on no account, disturb the convictions of heretics or sectarians! Is this Roman Catholic orthodoxy and consistency?

## CHAPTER X.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE "CULTUS" OF THE SAINTS EXAMINED.

1. In proceeding to the more particular examination of some of the doctrines and practices of the Roman Church, which the author of the "Essay on Development" has undertaken to defend on novel principles, it should be observed at the outset, that, as these tenets are not proposed to us on the authority of Scripture or of Apostolical tradition; as it is not pretended that they were generally known or received from the beginning; the proof of their truth resolves itself entirely into the possibility of deriving them, by some necessary or probable consequence, from some of the articles of the Catholic faith. The question is not to be settled by authority, but by reasoning; so that it is in vain to quote the language of the Fathers or the Councils on one side or the other. Mr. Newman has abandoned the argument from Scripture and Tradition, and has taken his stand on "Logical Sequence;" and to this ground we must now follow him. The question which is henceforward to be examined is, whether the tenets of Romanism are true developments of Christianity. I shall commence with the Worship

of the Saints, which may easily be proved to be a false development, by the aid of the first test laid down by Mr. Newman,—viz. "the preservation of type or idea."

2. To those whose religious belief is based on the Word of God, it is difficult to conceive how the human mind can ever have fallen into the error of Polytheism; and yet, repugnant as that error may seem to our preconceived notions, it is plain, from the almost universal prevalence of Polytheism till the publication of the Gospel, and from its actual adoption by the majority of the human race at this moment, that it is as little repugnant to the human mind as the notion of Deity itself. To maintain that Paganism has never been the religion of pious and intelligent men, would argue a forgetfulness of the facts which history records. Nor can it be said that, in all cases, the principles of morality were unknown or denied. Some of the heathen have afforded, both in precepts and practice, examples of virtue and religion.

It is perfectly true that scepticism and irreligious tenets prevailed in some of the ancient sects of heathen philosophy, and that many of the rites of the popular religion were of the most revolting immorality; but the advocates of Polytheism might admit the existence of abuses like these in their actual system, without relinquishing their general principle. Thus it has been, in fact; for the philosophy of Greece and Rome was not the less polytheistic because it ridiculed the popular superstitions; nor are the Brahmins in the present day worshippers of one God, because they disclaim all connexion with the abominations of Sakta worship.

When we proceed to prove, from reason, that there is but one God, the argument advanced by all our writers is derived, in the first place, from the order and harmony of the material universe, which afford indications of one creative Intellect; and, secondly, from the idea which enlightened reason forms of the Deity, as a supreme, indivisible, absolutely perfect Being, the great First Cause of all things. Now these arguments are, doubtless, conclusive against those who acknowledge a second Principle; or against the popular notions of the heathen mythology, which virtually excluded the notion of any Supreme Being, and subjected the world to a multitude of deities, soiled with crimes, and possessed of nearly equal powers. But this is not the notion which the more intelligent adherents of Polytheism have adopted; nor will the arguments directed against it be found efficacious in dealing with their theories. If, for instance, it were to have been urged on the disciples of Plato, Aristotle, or Zeno; or on the adherents of the Ionic and Pythagorean philosophy, that there are sufficient grounds for believing in a Great First Cause, who alone is to be regarded in the highest and most absolute sense, as God, they would have readily admitted the force of this reasoning[a]; but they would have re-

[a] Augustine (de Civit. Dei, lib. viii. c. ix.) thus speaks of that philosophy which approximated most nearly to Christianity: "Quicunque igitur philosophi de Deo summo et vero ista senserunt, quod et rerum creatarum sit effector, et lumen cognoscendarum, et bonum agendarum; quod ab illo nobis sit et principium naturæ, et veritas doctrinæ, et felicitas vitæ; sive Platonici accommodatius nuncupentur, sive quodlibet aliud sectæ suæ nomen imponant; sive tantummodo Ionici generis, qui eis præcipui fuerunt, ista senserint, sicut idem Plato, et qui eum bene intellexerunt; sive etiam Ita-

marked also, that it afforded no ground for disbelieving the existence of *inferior deities*, deriving their origin from this Great First Cause. They would have admitted that the Supreme and Eternal Deity was incapable of passion or infirmity; but they would, without scruple, have ascribed both to the deities immediately presiding over the world; they would still have believed in a series of gods and demons, reaching, in countless gradations, from the stars above, to each fountain, and grove, and material object on earth; and inferior deities would still have been recognized by myriads, as in the Greek mythology, or by hundreds of millions, as in the Hindu.

If we are to believe Augustine, numbers of thinking men amongst the heathen acknowledged one Supreme God [b], while they also believed in and defended the existence of inferior gods and demons. Of this opinion were many of the opponents of Christianity, such as Celsus and Porphyry, who, together with Iamblichus, Plotinus, Apuleius, and other writers, endeavoured argumentatively to establish the reasonableness of this belief [c].

lici, propter Pythagoram et Pythagoræos, et si qui forte alii ejusdem sententiæ identidem fuerunt; sive aliarum quoque gentium, qui sapientes vel philosophi habiti sunt, Atlantici, Libyci, Ægyptii, Indi, Persæ, Chaldæi, Scythæ, Galli, Hispani, aliique reperiuntur, qui hoc viderint ac docuerint; eos omnes cæteris anteponimus, eosque nobis propinquiores fatemur." See also the succeeding chapter.

[b] Augustine remarks on Varro: "Dicit etiam idem auctor acutissimus atque doctissimus, quod hi soli ei videantur animadvertisse quid esset Deus, qui crediderunt, eum esse animam, motu ac ratione mundum gubernantem." De Civ. Dei, l. iv. c. xxxi.

[c] "Non immerito me Platonicos philosophos elegisse cum quibus agam, quod in ista quæstione, quam modo suscepimus, agitur de naturali theologia, utrum propter felicitatem quæ post mortem futura est, uni Deo an pluribus sacra facere oporteat, satis, ut existimo,

Now this conveys some notion of the subtlety and difficulty of the argument with Polytheists. In fact, if at this point Revelation did not come in to aid the cause of truth, it is difficult to say how it would be possible to continue the argument with hopes of success. Be it remembered, that Polytheism has prescription in its favour—old and immemorial possession—far exceeding in age the Christian, and even the Mosaic, dispensation. If the theory of Development be true, Polytheism may lay claim to be regarded as a legitimate development of the original religion of man; and (setting aside all inquiries into external and historical evidences of a miraculous origin) it has more of external authority to plead for it than either Judaism or Christianity. The theory of Development, then, and the mystic theories which exclude external evidences, give to Polytheism the advantage in point of authority.

3. At this point, the declarations of Revelation are essentially necessary, in order to demonstrate the falsehood of Polytheism in every shape, and to establish the true unity of God. And, undoubtedly, nothing can be more clear and distinct than the repeated declarations of the Spirit of God, in Holy Scripture, with regard to this point. "I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt have none other gods but me." "The Lord he is God, in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath; there is none else." "All the gods of the people are idols." "They are vanity and the work of errors." "There is one God, and one

exposui . . Ex quibus sunt valde nobilitati Græci, Plotinus, Iamblichus, Porphyrius; in utraque autem lingua, id est, et Græca et Latina, Apuleius Afer exsistit Platonicus nobilis. Sed hi omnes, et cæteri ejusmodi, et ipse Plato diis plurimis esse sacra facienda putaverunt." De Civ. Dei, l. viii. c. xii.

Mediator between God and men." It is needless to multiply similar passages. It is a necessary consequence of this truth, that Divine worship should be offered only to the true God, and not to any other being, whether real or imaginary; and accordingly Revelation restricts such worship to God alone. "Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve." "Ye shall not fear other gods, nor bow yourselves to them, nor serve them, nor sacrifice to them." "Ye shall not go after other gods, of the gods of the people which are round about you; lest the anger of the Lord thy God be kindled against thee."

4. All these directions are very plain and intelligible; and if the Mosaic and the Christian revelations be really Divine revelations, Polytheism, or the worship of many gods, can have nothing further to allege. But the case would be different if Christians themselves could be proved to be polytheistic in theory and practice: could this be shown, the argument from revelation would fall powerless on the mind of a heathen, because it would be evident that the adherents of this revelation either disregarded its precepts, and thus virtually denied their obligation; or else that they understood them in a sense consistent with polytheism.

And this was in some degree accomplished by the Gnostic teachers, such as Cerinthus, Basilides, Valentinus, Manes, and others, whose doctrine of two Principles, in connexion with their fanciful theories of cosmogony, and their endless genealogies of Æons, included all the essential characteristics of polytheism, which was thus brought into apparent connexion with Christianity. These heretical teachers even

pretended to find their doctrines in the Scriptures themselves; and Irenæus and Augustine were obliged to refute their false interpretations. But here was a fact, of which Heathenism would gladly avail itself, —that professing Christians were not agreed amongst themselves whether polytheism was wrong in principle.

It was well for the cause of truth, that the sects of Gnostic origin generally arose and were propagated in entire independence of the Christian Church: this in itself furnished an evident token of their dissent from the real principles of Christianity, and there were other marked distinctions which need not here be enlarged on; but the rise of these heresies rendered it the most imperative duty of the Church to guard with jealousy the principle which it enshrined, and which constituted its essential distinction from Paganism; and this was accordingly done. Hence it was, that we find the creeds of the Church beginning with a profession of belief in "One God:" hence the unwearied zeal of the Fathers in maintaining the doctrine of the one Principle, or μοναρχία: hence the error of Sabellianism, which saved the unity of God by denying personal distinctions in the Godhead: hence the care and precision of the orthodox in guarding the doctrine of the Divinity of the Son and of the Holy Ghost from affording any countenance to the notion of a second or a third Deity. In all these instances, Christianity was protecting itself from the admission of principles, which would have at once reduced it in theory to the level of all other religions in the world, and would have constituted it merely one of the numerous forms of polytheism.

5. The Divinity of our blessed Lord was a doctrine

which Heathenism readily availed itself of, for the purpose of fastening on Christianity the admission of polytheistic principles. "In proportion as it was known to the heathen, it would seem to them to involve this consequence—that much as the Christians spoke against polytheism, yet, after all, they did admit a polytheism of their own instead of the Pagan. Hence the anxiety of the apologists, while they assail the heathen creed on this account, to defend their own against a similar charge. Thus Athenagoras says, 'Let no one ridicule the notion that God has a Son. For we have not such thoughts either about God the Father or the Son as your poets, who, in their mythologies, make the gods no better than men. But the Son of God is the *Word* of the Father . . . *the Father and Son being one.* The Son being in the Father, and the Father in the Son, in the unity and power of the Spirit, the Son of God is the *Mind* and *Word* of the Father[d].'"

We have distinct evidence of the use which the heathen made of this doctrine. The heathen Celsus urged on Christians their inconsistency in objecting to the practice of the heathen in adoring many gods, when they themselves adored Jesus Christ in addition to the Supreme God. The reply of Origen was grounded on the words of our Lord, "I and my Father are *one*[e];"—the perfect unity of the Godhead, which is the essential basis of the orthodox doctrine of the Trinity, thus preserving the grand distinction in principle between true religion and polytheism.

6. But this distinction was again destroyed by the

[d] Newman, Arians of the Fourth Century, p. 188.

[e] Origen, adv. Cels. l. viii. Oper. tom. i. p. 750.

doctrine of Arius, who acknowledged and worshipped in Jesus Christ a second Deity, created by, and inferior to the Father. This doctrine, which was revived by the Socinians of the sixteenth century in its most essential features[f], broke down the barriers between Christianity and heathen polytheism; the principle of worshipping more gods than one being sanctioned, Christianity would have taken its place amongst the systems of heathenism: it could no longer have appeared as their antagonist. Exalted as was the place which Arius assigned to Jesus Christ in the economy of grace, and in the government of the Universe; still as a created Being, essentially different from the Father, He was nothing else but an inferior God. "If," says Mr. Newman, "the professions of the Arians are to be believed, they confessed our Lord to be God, πληρὴς Θεός, yet at the same time to be infinitely distant from the perfections of the One eternal Cause. Here at once a ditheism is acknowledged; but Athanasius pushes on the admission to that of an unlimited polytheism. 'If,' he says, 'the Son were an object of worship for His transcendent

[f] The chief difference between the Arian and the Socinian notions of the Godhead of Christ was, that the former supposed It to have existed before the creation of the world, the latter to have been conferred in reward of His obedience on earth. Both parties agreed that He was to be adored. The Racovian Catechism contains the following passages: "Quæst. *Quid præterea Dominus Jesus huic præcepto primo addidit?* Resp. Id quod etiam Dominum Jesum pro Deo agnoscere tenemur, id est, pro eo, qui in nos potestatem habet divinam, et cui nos divinum exhibere honorem obstricti sumus." . . . "Quæst. *Quid vero sentis de iis hominibus, qui Christum non invocant, nec adorandum censent?* Resp. Prorsus non esse Christianos sentio, cum reipsâ Christum non habeant. Et licet verbis id negare non audeant, reipsâ negant tamen." Catechis. Eccl. Polon. p. 111, 115, ed. Racov. 1651.

glory, then every subordinate being is bound to worship his superior[g].'"

The opponents of Arianism saw the bearing of this doctrine on the controversy between Christianity and heathenism; they felt that it was conclusively in favour of the latter. The Arian "perfidy" consisted not merely in the denial and rejection of the Son of God; but in the betrayal of the principle of Monotheism which lies at the root of all true religion.

It was for this reason that the Fathers so uniformly imputed to Arianism an essential agreement with the heathen polytheism and idolatry. They justly regarded them as one and the same in principle[h].

[g] Arians, p. 249.

[h] Thus Ambrose (de Fide, lib. i. cap. i.): "Assertio autem nostræ fidei hæc est, ut unum Deum esse dicamus: neque ut Gentes Filium separemus . . . neque ut Arius plures credendo et dissimiles potestates, plures deos Gentili errore faciamus, quia scriptum est: Audi, Israel, Dominus Deus tuus Deus unus est." Cap. v. "Si Patre posterior est, recens est: et si unius non est Divinitatis, alienus est. Sed nec posterior, quia recens non est: nec alienus, quia ex Patre natus, quia super omnia est Deus benedictus in sæcula, sicut scriptum est. Sed si alienum putant, cur adorant eum, cum scriptum sit: Neque adorabis Deum alienum? Aut si non adorant, fateantur, et finis est, ne quem sub religiosi nominis professione decipiant." Thus also Cyril Alexandrinus (De Sancta Trinitate, Dialog. v. Oper. t. v. p. 566): Οὐκοῦν, εἰ μὴ φύσει καὶ ἀληθῶς Θεὸν εἶναι πεπιστεύκασι τὸν Υἱὸν, κτίσμα που πάντως, καὶ ἕτερον παρὰ τοῦτο οὐδὲν εἴη ἄν. ἐπὶ δέ γε τοῖς ὧδε φρονεῖν ᾠρημένοις, οἶμαι δὴ πρέπειν ἐκεῖνο εἰπεῖν, κ. τ. λ. . . εἶτα τί προσκυνεῖν ἐγνώκασιν ὃν τοῖς τῆς κτίσεως ἐγκαταδεσμοῦσι μέτροις, καὶ τῆς κατὰ πάντων οὐσιώδους ὑπεροχῆς ὑσσεβοῦντες ἀπαλλάττουσι; κ. τ. λ. Vide Dial. iv. p. 512. The same argument is employed by Hilary (de Trinit. l. viii. 28): "Scisne nunc hæretice, in quo Spiritu dicas Christum creaturam? Cum enim in anathemate sint, qui servierunt creaturæ potius quam Creatori; Christum creaturam confitens, quid sis intellige, qui non ignores quia in maledicto sit religio creaturæ."

The following passage from the Jesuit Petavius, supplies ample additional evidence to the same effect: "Hinc permulti veterum Patrum Arianos idololatras vocare consueverunt, *quod eum quem creaturam fate-*

In this view the author of "the Essay on Development," has, on several occasions, stated his full con-

*bantur*, adorare tamen sese dicerent, *ac nihil eos differre ab gentilibus asserunt:* ut inter cæteros Athanasius (Orat. i. cont. Arian. et Orat. iv. p. 263), Basilius (Hom. 27, cont. Sabell. et Arian.), Gregorius Nyssenus (Lib. de Fide ad Simpl. t. ii. p. 470), cujus locus mihi quidem contra Arianam perfidiam luculentissimus videtur, ob idque describendus. *Jubet*, inquit, *Deus per prophetam, nullum recentem Deum arbitrari Deum, neque adorare Deum alienum. Atqui perspicuum est id recens appellari, quod non est ex æterno: et e contrario rursus æternum dicitur, quod non est recens. Qui igitur non ex æterno unigenitum Deum ex Patre esse credit, recentem eum esse non negat. Quod enim æternum non est, recens omnino est: quidquid autem recens est, Deus non est: quemadmodum Scriptura dicit; Non erit in te Deus alienus. Itaque qui dicit aliquando illum non fuisse, hic ejus divinitatem negat.*

"Ac Cyrillus quidem in Dialogo quarto de Trinitate tale esse dogma istud hæreticorum ostendit, qui Filium neque verum esse Deum, et tamen adorandum venerandumque dicebant, uti Gentiles, qui ad Christianam fidem conversi sunt, nihilo meliorem in statum, quam in quo dudum erant, translati fuerint. Nam et creaturas adorare, iisque servire, et plures confiteri deos nihilominus pergunt, si Arianos audiunt. Ac Gentiles quidem *ita creaturæ potius, quam Creatori serviebant, et his, qui non sunt dii, ut primum deitatis locum attribuerent* uni alicui, et summo *fabricatori hujus universitatis Deo*, ait Irenæus (lib. ii. c. 9): Eodem ergo modo et Ariani Deum habebant, adorabantque Filium: sed supra hunc alium supremum locabant. Quos quidem acri oratione merito sic Faustinus objurgat: *Respice ad Apostolum Paulum, considera quæ opprobria, quas obscenitates de iis referat, qui, ut ipse ait, commutaverunt veritatem Dei in mendacio, et coluerunt et servierunt creaturæ potius quam Creatori. Tu si sic credis, et si colis, et servis unigenito Filio Dei, ut dicas illum esse creaturam, illa te mala, miser, expectant, quibus illi puniuntur, qui commutaverunt veritatem Dei in mendacio, &c.*

"Postremo non minus gravis, quam vera est illa Basilii (lib. ii. cont. Eunom. p. 61) ejusdem hæresis notatio; *Cum multa sint quibus Christianismus ab Gentili errore et Judaica inscitia discernitur; nullum ad id potius esse dogma in salutari nostro Evangelio quam fidem in Patrem et Filium. Nam Creatorem, et opificem Deum etiam ii fatentur, qui quocunque a nobis errore separantur. At vero qui Patrem falso appellatum, et Filium voce tenus prædicat, nec interesse putat, Patrem an Creatorem, et Filium, an facturam dixerit, ubi illum*

currence. One passage has been just quoted; another shall be here added. In explaining the imputation of ungodliness (ἀθεότης) to the Arians, he remarks, that one "reason for the title seems to have lain in the *idolatrous* character of Arian worship on its own showing, viz. as worshipping One whom they yet maintained to be a creature[i]." Again, "The Arians were in the dilemma of holding two Gods or worshiping the creature, unless they denied to our Lord both Divinity and worship[j]."

The works of St. Athanasius, too, on which he was commenting, furnish the most striking evidence of the same view of Arianism.

"If," says Athanasius, "it be not so, but the Word is a creature and a work out of nothing, either He is not true God, because He is Himself one of the creatures, or if they name Him God from regard for the Scriptures, they must of necessity say that there are two Gods, one Creator and the other Creature, and must serve two Lords, one ingenerate, and the other generate and a creature . . . And with such sentiments they will certainly be going on to more Gods, for this will be the essay of those who revolt from the One God. Wherefore, then, when the Arians have these speculations and views, do they not rank themselves with the Gentiles? For they, too, as these, worship the creature more than the Creator

*reponemus? aut cui parti annumerabimus, Judæorum, an Gentilium? Non enim Christianis seipsum adscribet, qui vim pietatis, ac velut characterem cultus nostri et religionis ejurat.* Vide Gregor. Nazian. Orat. 40." Petavius, de Trinitate, lib. ii. cap. xii. sect. vi. No doubt can remain in any reasonable mind, after the perusal of this passage, that the Arian worship of Christ involved the principle of polytheism, and was chargeable with idolatry.

[i] Library of the Fathers, vol. viii. p. 3.

[j] P. 423.

of all; and though they shrink from the Gentile name, in order to deceive the unskilful, yet they secretly hold a like sentiment with them[k]." Such is the sentiment of Athanasius, repeated continually in his controversies with the Arians.

7. Arianism had its subterfuges and pleas by which it sought to evade the charge of idolatry. When it was objected by the orthodox that the worship of a creature as God was idolatrous, and that divine worship was by the word of God restricted to God alone, they could readily answer, that an inferior worship was, of course, offered to Christ, while supreme worship was reserved for God the Father. They might have pointed out the absurdity of imputing to them the same worship in the one case as in the other; when, according to their belief, the one Being was a creature, and the other the Creator. This was the distinction afterwards taken by the Socinians, who paid an inferior worship to Christ as to a *created* God[l]. But if this distinction was sufficient to clear Arians and Socinians from the charge of idolatry, it was evidently sufficient to protect the Gentiles from the same imputation; for the distinction was perfectly recognized in their theology; nor did they always profesto offer to inferior Deities the same kind or degree of worship

[k] Discourse iii. Lib. Fathers, p. 423.

[l] The Arians, according to Petavius, pretended that they worshipped Christ σχετικῶς, or with a relative and inferior worship (de Trinit. lib. ii. c. xii. sect. vii.). So also the Socinians, in the Racovian Catechism: "Quæst. *Ergo is honor et cultus Christo ad eum modum tribuitur, ut nullum sit inter Christum et Deum hoc in genere discrimen?* Resp. Imo permagnum est. Nam adoramus et colimus Deum tanquam Causam primam salutis nostræ; Christum tanquam secundam; aut, ut cum Paulo loquamur, Deum tanquam eum ex quo omnia, Christum ut eum, per quem omnia."

which they offered to those of superior power[m]. If, then, the Arian worship of the Son be lawful in principle and consistent with Christianity, the essential principle of polytheism is admitted, and the imputation of idolatry is at an end; or rather, idolatry is allowed to be lawful, and the Catholic Church is condemned[n].

8. Now to this point precisely "the Theory of Development" conducts us. The worship of the blessed Virgin and of the Saints and Angels, has been gradually developed in the Church; and has at length assumed a form which is considered by its opponents to include the essential characteristics of idolatry. The Essayist, admitting, as he does, the late introduction of this worship into the Christian Church, finds an anticipation and justification of its essential idea in the Arian theology, and the dealings of the Church with it.

The Arian "controversy," he observes, "opened

[m] Augustine takes notice of this distinction: "Qui autem putant, hæc visibilia sacrificia diis aliis congruere, illi vero [Deo] tanquam invisibili invisibilia, et *majori majora, meliorique meliora*, qualia sunt puræ mentis et bonæ voluntatis officia; profecto nesciunt, hæc ita esse signa illorum, sicut verba sonantia signa sunt rerum." Civ. Dei, l. x. c. xix. The distinction indeed is so obvious, that it could not possibly have escaped notice.

[n] Petavius very justly observes, on the Arian defence against the imputation of idolatry, that this plea would justify polytheism. "Non est difficile frigidæ istius cavillationis inanitatem arguere, itidem ut Athanasius, Cyrillus, aliique faciunt. Nam si divino cultu ac veneratione Dei Filium ideo prosequimur, quod imago sit veri Dei, non per se ac vere Deus . . . licebit etiam creatis rebus cæteris, eundem honorem habere, imprimis homini, qui et imago ipse Dei est, et Deum in se σχετικῶς continet." De Trin. lib. ii. c. xii. sect. 7. The plea of *relative* worship, of course authorizes the offering of sacrifices, and every other mode of external worship to inferior deities, and even idols. If this distinction justified the Arians, or if it now justifies Romanists, it must equally justify Paganism.

a question which it did not settle. It discovered a new sphere, if we may so speak, in the realms of light, to which the Church had not yet assigned its inhabitant. Arianism had admitted that our Lord was both the God of the evangelical covenant, and the actual Creator of the Universe; but even this was not enough, because it did not confess Him to be the One, Everlasting, Infinite, Supreme Being, but to be made by Him. It was not enough with that heresy to proclaim Him to be begotten ineffably before all worlds; not enough to place Him high above all creatures as the type of all the works of God's hands; not enough to make Him the Lord of His Saints, the Mediator between God and man, the Object of worship, the Image of the Father; not enough, because it was not all; and between all, and any thing short of all, there was an infinite interval. The highest of creatures is levelled with the lowest in comparison of the One Creator Himself. That is, the Nicene Council recognized the eventful principle, that while we believe and profess any being to be a creature, such a being is really no God to us, *though honoured by us with whatever high titles and with whatever homage.* Arius and Asterius did all but confess that Christ was the Almighty; they said much more than St. Bernard or St. Alphonso have since said of St. Mary; yet they left Him a creature and were found wanting."

"Thus there was 'a wonder in Heaven:' a *throne* was seen, far above all created powers, mediatorial, intercessory; a title archetypal; a *crown* bright as the morning star; a glory issuing from the Eternal Throne; robes pure as the heavens; and *a sceptre over all;* and who was the predestined heir of that

Majesty? . . . The vision is found in the Apocalypse, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars. The votaries of Mary do not exceed the true faith, unless the blasphemers of her Son came up to it. The Church of Rome is not idolatrous, unless Arianism is orthodoxy[o]."

The extraordinary nature of this extract will excuse its transcription at length. In order that no mistake may arise as to the author's meaning, he describes the doctrine which is here inculcated as the "Deification of St. Mary."

The first observation which naturally occurs on the perusal of the above passage is, that the learned author appears to have wholly forgotten, that polytheism and idolatry are not necessarily connected with any belief in the *equality* of the objects of worship. Heathenism, after the promulgation of Christianity, for the most part recognized the existence of a supreme Being, and yet it continued the worship of inferior and created gods. Such was the doctrine of the Neo-Platonists, and such at the present day is that of the Brahmins. Had the author borne this in mind, he could not have ventured to assert, as he has done, without the slightest attempt at *proof*, that the Nicene Council, in condemning the Arian heresy, considered that the titles and the worship attributed to our Lord by that heresy, were free from idolatry. The orthodox Fathers unanimously declared them to be idolatrous and polytheistic in principle, because they were attributed to One who was only acknowledged to be a creature.

[o] Essay on Development, p. 405, 406.

It is amazing, that in the face of the repeated assertions to this effect of St. Athanasius, Mr. Newman can attempt to attribute to the Council of Nice the justification of the principles involved in the Arian worship of our Lord.

The position of the last named writer is, that while any being is acknowledged as a creature, we cannot fall into idolatry, "whatever high titles," and "whatever homage" we may pay to it[p]. If this be the case, the Platonists and the Brahmins are completely

[p] This bold and sweeping assertion at once supersedes the necessity for the distinction which Romanists are fond of pointing out, between their worship of the Supreme God, and of the inferior "deities," whether saints, angels, or the "Mother of God." *Sacrifice*, they allege, is offered only to the Supreme Deity; prayers, invocations, lights, incense, and prostrations, to the others. But, on the principle of the Essayist, there could not be any idolatry in offering *sacrifice* to the saints and angels, as long as they were regarded as creatures. Does it not seem that it would be a legitimate development of the *cultus* of the saints, that the Mass should be offered *to* them, and not merely *to their honour*, as it now is? On the principles of the Essayist, such a development would be truly pious. The Jesuit Perrone is of the same opinion as the Essayist: "Ex statuto principio et illud infertur, *nunquam Catholicos superstitionis in cultu quem Sanctis tribuunt, argui posse.* Si enim cultus pendet ab *intentione colentis, et hæc a fide, quam colens profitetur, nisi Catholicus contra fidem quam profitetur agere velit, impossibile ipsi est, ut idololatria se commaculet*, cum juxta professionem suam unus Deus sit latria colendus, creaturæ autem, quæcunque sint, non nisi cultu inferioris ordinis, atque ut servi Dei, colendæ, seu cultu duliæ adorandæ sint." Prælect. Theol. t. iv. p. 340. This is certainly a very comfortable view of the case; but how does it happen, if *intention* is every thing, that certain rites, such as these, are reserved to God? "Alia *Deo soli reservata sunt*, nec nisi Ipsi soli deferri possunt; qualia sunt *sacrificia, vota, jura-juranda, templorum inauguratio, ac cætera hujusmodi*" (p. 339). It is absurd to restrict sacrifices, vows, &c. to God, if there can be no idolatry while the objects of worship are acknowledged to be creatures. No reason can be assigned for any such restriction. And yet, if this restriction were at an end, Paganism would be, at once, *openly established.*

justified: there can be no impropriety in admitting any assignable number of "Gods[q]," if they are only acknowledged to be creatures; there can be no idolatry in worshipping them—in "all but confessing them to be Almighty;" in recognizing in them the creators and governors of the world—in acknowledging with the Neo-Platonists their mediatorial powers[r]. On the principles, then, of this writer, Christianity includes the whole theory of polytheism, and is to be regarded merely as a branch of that ancient religion. In this view it is evident that the Catholic Church must have erred in the fourth century, in condemning those who worshipped angels; and in treating the Collyridians who worshipped the Virgin, as heretics and idolaters. No one has ever pretended, that the object of worship was, in either of these cases, regarded as more than a creature. The Collyridians and the Phrygians merely worshipped the angels and the Virgin as "Deities;" they believed with the Essayist in their "Deification;" but they could not possibly have supposed them equal with God, or uncreated. Such an absurdity has never yet been imputed to them. Consequently, according to the principles of the Essayist, these sects must have

[q] As the Essay distinctly speaks of the "*Deification* of the Saints" (p. 403) as well as of the Virgin, the number of inferior deities in Christianity, according to this view, fully rivals that of the deities of Paganism.

[r] Apuleius, according to Augustine (Civit. Dei, viii. 18), urged the worship of demons, because they are appointed, "ut quoniam nullus deus miscetur homini, quod Platonem dixisse perhibent, isti ad deos perferant preces hominum, et inde ad homines impetrata quæ poscunt." Again, c. 21: "Sed nimirum tantæ hujus absurditatis et indignitatis est magna necessitas, quod scilicet deos ætherios humana curantes quid agerent homines utique lateret, nisi dæmones aërii nunciarent?"

been unjustly condemned by the Church, as they were not guilty of any idolatry.

I believe it is scarcely necessary to make any additional remarks on this ingenious theory of the Essayist. If it affords a full and complete justification of polytheism, I suppose that it is needless to proceed any further.

9. But there is still one point which deserves notice. The author distinctly states, that the position and the worship attributed to the Virgin Mary in the Church of Rome, stand on the same ground as the Arian worship of our Lord, and are only defended by the same reasoning as that which exempts Arianism from the imputation of polytheism and idolatry. His notion of the position assigned by Romanists to the Virgin, has been acknowledged as perfectly correct, by the chief literary organ of Romanism in this country. "Mr. Newman," says the Dublin Review, "has here expressed more happily than probably it has ever been done before, the position assigned to the ever blessed Mother of our Lord in the devotional feelings of Catholics; immeasurably lower than that of her Son, but quite as high as heretics in ancient and modern days have wished to allot to Him. But the passage itself, independent of the noble view which it presents, will not be less interesting on the ground of its evidence, how completely the writer had imbued his heart with Catholic feeling, while he was studying Catholic truth[s]."

Thus then Romanism, according to the statements of its advocates, attributes to the Virgin as a creature, precisely the same position and

[s] Dublin Rev. No. xxxviii. Dec. 1845, p. 537.

worship which, when ascribed to Christ as a creature, were denounced by the Fathers as Pagan and idolatrous; or, in other words, the worship of the Virgin as practised by Romanists, is such a worship as the primitive Church adjudged to be idolatrous. This is what we have been long urging in vain on the Church of Rome; and it is now established more conclusively than ever by her own advocates. There can be no doubt, I think, that if Athanasius, Ambrose, Cyril of Alexandria, Hilary, Basil, Gregory Nyssen, and the other Fathers who so earnestly contended for the faith against Arianism, were to revisit the earth, they would not admit to their communion those, who avowedly apply to the Virgin Mary the Arian worship of Jesus Christ. They would most assuredly regard those who may advocate such a doctrine, as polytheists and idolaters. They would detect the evasions by which its adherents endeavour to escape these imputations. They would tell them, that polytheism is perfectly consistent with the recognition of One uncreated and Eternal Being; that idolatry is easily reconcilable with the ascription of supreme worship to this One Being. They would remind them, that these distinctions were employed by the Platonists and the other advocates of heathenism, to justify the worship of their false Deities.

10. The "doctrine of development," must here become the sole refuge of Romanism. The progress of ideas, the superior enlightenment of the middle ages, the imperfect comprehension of the idea of Christianity by the Fathers, must be its sole protection against the adverse authority of the early Church: but in taking this course, a double fate awaits it; for in one direction Polytheism stands ready to

congratulate it on the admission of all its own principles, and to extend accordingly the right hand of fraternity and fellowship to it; while in another, Rationalism offers its felicitations on the concession, that the early Church was unenlightened on the essential principles of Christianity; and, with the aid of this concession proceeds to demolish the doctrine of the Trinity, Incarnation, and Atonement, and finally to break down the authority of Holy Scripture,—of revealed religion,—and of the Church of Christ.

Let Romanism endeavour to retire from this embarrassing position, and return to its old foundation of Tradition, Infallibility, and Church authority. Here again it is met by Rationalism and Infidelity, who claim its arguments and principles as conclusive against the authenticity, genuineness, and inspiration of Scripture, and therefore against Christianity itself. Let it deny the inferences of Rationalism from its arguments, and let it admit the authenticity and intelligibility of Scripture; and the whole basis on which it rests its claims to infallibility is at an end: the principles of the Reformation become triumphant.

11. There can be no reasonable doubt, I think, that the doctrine and practice of Romanism in regard to the position and the worship of creatures, are subversive of the essential idea of Christianity. The unity of God is included in that essential idea: it is the first article of the Christian creed. But this article is subverted, and polytheism is justified, by the principles and practice of Romanism. I have directed attention to the worship of the Virgin, or what the Essayist entitles the "prerogatives of St.

Mary," because it furnishes the clearest evidence of the real state of the case; nor does it seem necessary to pursue the subject further into detail, and to show how the same principle is involved in other branches of the "cultus" of Saints and Angels. The author of the "Essay on Development" quotes the Council of Eliberis, and the language of Justin Martyr, to prove, that the Saints and Angels were worshipped and adored in the very first ages of Christianity[t]. The language of Justin Martyr, in particular, according to Mr. Newman's interpretation, comprises the open avowal, in the face of the heathen world, that the angels were worshipped by Christians. This writer has justly observed, that "it is possible to have too much evidence; that is, evidence so full or exact, as to throw suspicion over the case for which it is adduced;" and if, as he admits, Christians were not likely, in the first ages, to entertain the question of the abstract allowableness of *images* in the Catholic ritual, with the actual superstitions and immoralities of Paganism before their eyes; if they were not likely to establish the worship of the Virgin, until the worship of God Incarnate had been "duly secured[u];" it seems pretty evident that they would not have practised the worship of creatures, in any way, while Polytheism was ready to seize on every such practice as a justification of its own rites. It may be added, that if the introduction of such worship was, on this account, unlawful in the primitive Church, it is equally so at the present day, because Christianity has still to maintain her cause against Polytheism. The Romanist is, in consequence of the principle and

[t] Essay on Development, p. 376, 377. [u] P. 144, 145.

practice of his own communion, obliged to admit in argument with a Pagan, the *principle* of worshipping a plurality of gods, and of offering sacrifice and other rites before their idols. All that he can consistently attempt is, to substitute the worship of the Virgin, the Saints and Angels, for that of the inferior Deities of heathenism; to install their images in the place of the idols; to confirm the distinction already existing in the heathen mind between the supreme Deity, and the secondary Gods; and to substitute the Mass for animal sacrifices, restricting it (most arbitrarily and inconsistently on his own principles) to the supreme Being. But in all this, polytheism and idolatry remain unchanged in principle: the only difference is, that Christianity has been converted into a species of polytheism.

## CHAPTER XI.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF PURGATORY EXAMINED.

THERE is an omission in the "Essay on Development" which is not very easily accounted for. Amongst those doctrines and practices of the Church which were originally derived from notions supplied by Heresy or Heathenism, the author has forgotten to include one, which presents a striking and acknowledged resemblance to the prevalent belief of the ancient and modern heathen world: I allude to the doctrine of Purgatory. If the advocates of the Romish system have not been able to trace any very distinct proofs of this tenet in Scripture, or to establish the fact of its derivation from the apostolical teaching; they have, at least, found no difficulty in convincing every reasonable mind, that not only the Mahommedans and Jews, but the Hindus, Chinese, Persians, and the oriental nations generally, have, in some shape or other, upheld the opinion, that *sin is expiated, and the soul is purified by temporal penalties after this life.* This doctrine was received by the adherents of the Platonic, Stoic, and Pythagorean philosophies; and was inculcated by Homer, Virgil, and other writers who represented the popular belief

of Greece and Rome[a]. The universality of belief, even amongst heathens, in the existence of purgatorial inflictions after death, is urged by Romish theologians as a conclusive argument in support of the doctrine.

[a] Bellarmine, de Purgatorio, lib. i. c. xi., refers to the heathen doctrines on this subject; and Perrone observes, that it is not surprising that some Protestants have admitted a state of expiation after this life; "cum pro hoc statu pugnet quodammodo universum genus humanum, sive quodam ipsius naturæ instinctu, sive, quod longe probabilius existimo, ex antiqua traditione." After remarking that it is believed by Jews and Mahommedans, he proceeds thus: "Conveniunt Ethnici, tum Græci, tum Romani. Etenim Clem. Alexan. refert, Stoicos credidisse statum expiationis post mortem, quem vocabant ἐμπύρωσιν. Doctrina Pythagoræorum circa metempsychosin eidem fundamento innititur. Græci passim vocant mortuos κεκμηκότες et καμόντας, id est, *patientes, laborantes*, &c. Hinc Homerus, Iliad. iii. et ex eo Virgilius, Æneid. lib. vi. v. 441, memorat *lugentes campos*, ac v. 740 et seq. pluribus describit eos qui

> *. . . exercentur pœnis, veterumque malorum*
> *Supplicia expendunt.*

Claudianus similiter, *in Ruffinum*, lib. ii. v. 491.

> *Quos ubi per varios annos, per mille figuras*
> *Egit Lethæo purgatos flumine*, &c.

Plato ipse, tum alibi, tum in Dialog. *de Animo*, docet animas in luto et tenebris detineri, quamdiu penitus purgatæ sint. Sic etiam Persæ. Zoroaster enim apud Eusebium, *Præp. Evang.* loquitur de transmigratione animarum per duodecim zodiaci signa, priusquam emaculatæ perveniant ad cœlestem beatitudinem. Sic Indi, &c." Perrone, Prælect. Theolog. Tract. de Deo Creatore, vol. iii. p. 316—319.

The doctrine of Purgatory, *i. e.* of the expiation of unrepented sin by temporal penalties after this life, was also taught by the Anabaptists, according to Gerhard (Loci Theol. l. xxxi. c. vi. sect. 62), who says: "Anabaptistæ superiori sæculo docere cœperunt, *omnes damnatos atque ipsos Diabolos tandem salvandos esse, et pœnis seu cruciatibus ipsorum, quos peccatis suis promeriti sunt, finem aliquando impositum iri.* August. Confess. art. xvii. Bullinger, lib. ii. contra Anabaptist. cap. 15." The Socinians, Mennonites, Dunkers, Shakers, and Universalists, have also generally maintained this doctrine. See Archbishop Magee, *Discourses on Atonement and Sacrifice*, vol. ii. p. 389, 396—398, 3rd ed. Adams' *Religious World Displayed*, vol. iii. p. 382—384. Jews, Turks, Infidels, and Heretics! A goodly array of authorities truly!

2. We have already seen, that, according to Mr. Newman, the doctrine of purgatory is not, as Wiseman and the generality of the Romish controversialists have contended, an apostolical tradition; but a development gradually wrought out by the Church. It now remains to trace the particular process of thought by which, in the opinion of the Essayist, it was developed.

The origin of the doctrine of purgatory, then, is traced to the question, How was the guilt of sin, *committed after baptism*, to be removed[b]? This question "was felt to be so intimately and acutely personal by the early Christians, that they delayed the rite, as Christians now delay attendance on the Holy Eucharist;" and accordingly, various instances may be pointed out in ecclesiastical history, of children of Christian parents who were not baptized during their childhood[c]. "The primitive Fathers," however, "appear to have conceived that the Church was empowered to grant one, and one only, reconciliation after grievous offences; at least, this was the practice of the times." A more indulgent rule, however, gradually gained ground; but in no case was reconciliation granted until severe penances had been undergone[d].

"Here a serious question presented itself to the minds of Christians, which was now to be wrought out:—Were these punishments merely signs of contrition, or, in any sense, satisfactions for sin? If the former, they might be absolutely remitted at the discretion of the Church, as soon as true repentance was discovered; the end had then been attained, and

[b] Essay on Development, p. 410.

[c] P. 411.

[d] P. 413, 414.

nothing more was necessary. . . . Yet, though there might be a reason of the moment for shortening the penance imposed by the Church, this does not at all decide the question, whether that ecclesiastical penance *be not part of an expiation made to the Almighty Judge for the sin;* and supposing this really to be the case, the question follows, How is the complement of that satisfaction to be wrought out, which on just grounds of present expedience has been suspended by the Church now?"

"As to this question, it cannot be doubted that the Fathers considered penance as not a mere expression of contrition, but as an act done directly towards God *and a means of averting his anger*[e]." In proof of this, Ambrose, Jerome, Cyprian, and

[e] It may be observed here, that the doctrine of Satisfaction, as stated by Mr. Newman in this place, is simply this: that works of penance or satisfactions are necessary to acquire *remission of sin.* The doctrine that satisfaction obtains the remission only of the *temporal penalties of sin,* is not put forward. Morinus, *de Discipl. Sacramenti Pœnitentiæ*, lib. iii. c. xi., observes, that Christian antiquity did not hold the latter doctrine, which, however, is now universally received in the Roman Church. "Alterum disciplinæ pœnitentialis fundamentum, quod nobis hujus libri initio explicandum proposuimus, hoc est axioma *Christianorum omnium animis a Patribus insinuatum,* satisfactiones ab Ecclesia impositas, diligenter et strenue peractas, *non tantum pœnæ temporariæ sed etiam æternæ* satisfactorias esse, et expunctrices, *animam purgare et emaculare, Dei misericordiam in peccatores allicere, et scelerum veniam ab eo impetrare* . . . Non dubito, inquit Joannes Maldonatus, quin *omnes veteres Authores satisfactionem agnoverint pro culpa.* Nam non putabant Deum *culpam* remittere peccatorum, priusquam externis pœnitentiis Deum placassent: neque sacerdotes putabant dare posse pœnitenti Absolutionem, priusquam, quasi interpretes Divinæ voluntatis, viderent eam pœnitentiam egisse peccatorem, ut credibile esset Deum jam illi esse placatum." The doctrine of all modern Romish divines, *e. g.* Tournely, Perrone, Wiseman, limits the efficacy of satisfaction to removing the temporal penalties of sin, as distinguished from its eternal penalties and its guilt.

Basil, are quoted; after which the writer continues: "If so, the question follows which was above contemplated,—if, in consequence of death, or the exercise of the Church's discretion, the *plena pœnitentia* is not accomplished in its ecclesiastical shape, how and when will the residue be exacted[f]?"

According to the Essayist, Clemens Alexandrinus taught, that it will be accomplished *after this life;* and Cyprian, the Acts of Perpetua and Felicitas, Cyril of Jerusalem, and others, are quoted to the same effect[g].

The sum of the argument is this:—In the opinion of the early Church, sins committed after baptism were only pardoned by God, when works of satisfaction or penance had been duly performed. If, then, (they further reasoned,) satisfaction be not performed in *this* life, there must be equivalent penalties in the next. This is, doubtless, a simple and intelligible argument; and Mr. Newman, who contends for the legitimacy of the development, adduces this process of reasoning as an example of "logical sequence."

3. I am not now concerned to examine whether Mr. Newman is justified in attributing any such process of reasoning as he here describes, to the primitive church. He himself, as we shall see, proposes elsewhere a different theory on this subject. Setting aside, therefore, the question whether the argument is, or is not, that of the primitive Church; let us consider its validity in itself.

According to this doctrine, then, the pardon of sin cannot be acquired unless certain temporal satisfac-

[f] Essay, p. 414, 415. [g] P. 415—417.

tions are made by the sinner to an offended God, or in their default, certain penalties are exacted from him. Pardon is to be gained only on these indispensable conditions. If, then, Penance be thus essential to pardon, and yet may be wrought out by suffering penalties after this life, there is no reason why Contrition and Confession, or the remainder of the expiation due to God for sin, should not be equally effective after this life; or why their absence in this life should not be compensated for by purgatorial inflictions in the next. If it be admitted, that the actual performance of works of satisfaction or penance is not an essential part of repentance, the difficulty is, of course, at an end; but so is the doctrine of purgatory also. If, on the other hand, it be essential, as Mr. Newman and the Romanists generally contend, it follows that sins will be pardoned hereafter which have not been repented of in this life; or, in other words, the punishment of sin in the next life will not be eternal, but temporal; and thus the doctrine of the Origenists, Platonists, Socinians, Rationalists, Buddhists, and Brahmins, who believe that the future punishments of sin will not be eternal, is established; in opposition to the language of Holy Scripture, the Athanasian Creed, and the definitions of the Fifth Œcumenical Synod. The Metempsychosis taught by Origen, after the Pythagorean and oriental philosophy, becomes, at this point, perfectly credible as a means of purification; while the sinner has before him the prospect of ultimate salvation, although he may have never repented of his sins in this life.

This is not merely the result of Mr. Newman's argument; it is that to which the reasoning of all

the most eminent Roman Catholic theologians leads. Thus they refer to the book of Maccabees, and to the New Testament, to prove that *sins will be forgiven hereafter* which are not forgiven in this life[h]. Their interpretations of the passages cited, and their arguments from the ancient liturgies, in which prayer is made for the dead, alike concur to show, that those who have departed without having acquired the pardon of their sins, or who are not in a state of justification at the close of life, will, in a future state, obtain remission of sins. This conclusion is, indeed, directly contrary to the faith of the Roman Church, which consigns those who die in unrepented mortal sin to eternal punishment; nevertheless it follows legitimately from the arguments on which the doctrine of purgatory is supported.

4. This result is startling enough; but Romanism has prevented itself from actually coming to such a conclusion: it has contrived to loosen one of the foundation-stones of the dangerous fabric. The whole theory, as we have seen, depends on the *necessity of penance.* But what are we to say, or rather what is Mr. Newman to say, to the fact, that Romanists do not hold the actual performance of satisfaction or penance to be an essential condition to the pardon

[h] Thus Perrone: "Vere igitur Ecclesiam doctrinam suam de purgatorio ex sacris litteris in primis hausisse, quoad Vetus Testamentum, monumentum ineluctabile habetur 2 Machab. xii. 43 . . . 'Sancta ergo et salubris est cogitatio pro defunctis exorare, ut *a peccatis solvantur*.' Quæ peremptorii testimonii verba perspicua sunt adeo, ut nulla indigeant explanatione . . Idem patet quoad Novum Testamentum ex iis, quæ Matth. xii. 32, Christus protulit: 'Quicunque dixerit, &c.' Quibus verbis non obscure Christus alludit ad receptam apud Judæos persuasionem, *nonnulla peccata etiam in futuro sæculo remitti*." Tract. de Deo Creatore, Prælect. Theolog. vol. iii. p. 311. See Bellarmine, de Purgatorio, lib. i. c. iii. iv.

of sins? The force of the argument advanced by Mr. Newman in support of the doctrine of purgatory, rests on the supposition that it *is* essential. It is from this absolute necessity that the doctrine of future suffering, in default of penance, is inferred. And undoubtedly, the Council of Trent speaks in the most decisive manner on this point. Penance or satisfaction is, according to its acts and decrees, essential to the remission of sins[i]. Nevertheless, it has been for centuries the universal practice in the Roman Church to pronounce Absolution, or to reconcile penitents and declare them fully absolved from sin, *before* penances or satisfactions are performed; and it is the received doctrine of her writers, that satisfaction or penance is not an *essential*, but only an integral part of the sacrament of penance; and that absolution given to a penitent who is contrite and has confessed his sins, is valid *without any satisfaction*[j].

[i] "The acts of the penitent himself, that is, contrition, confession, and *satisfaction*, are, as it were, the matter of this Sacrament; which, inasmuch as they are *required by the Divine institution* to the completeness of the sacrament, and the full and perfect *remission of sins*, are for this reason called *parts of repentance*." Sessio xiv. cap. iii. "It is agreeable to the Divine goodness, that *our sins should not be forgiven without satisfaction*, lest, taking occasion therefrom, we should think lightly of them, &c." Ib. cap. viii. "If any one deny that, in order to the *full and perfect remission of sins*, three acts are requisite in the penitent (constituting, as it were, the matter of the sacrament of penitence), that is to say, contrition, confession, and *satisfaction*, which are called the *three parts of repentance* . . . let him be anathema." Sess. xiv. can. iv. There cannot be any question, after this, that satisfaction or penance is regarded by the Synod of Trent as essential to the pardon of sin.

[j] Satisfaction, says Ligorio (Theologia Moralis, t. vi. p. 122), or penance imposed by a confessor, "*est necessaria non necessitate sacramenti, sed præcepti . . . est pars sacramenti non essentialis, sed integralis tantum.*" Tournely says: "Communis theologorum sen-

Now, if this be the case,—if the actual performance of satisfaction or penance be not essential to absolution or remission of sins, it is evident that we have no right to conclude, that if such satisfaction be omitted in this life, sin can only be remitted when the defect of satisfaction has been expiated by temporary or purgatorial penalties in the next life.

But besides this, there is another point which is well deserving of attention. We have seen that the Council of Trent is distinct and positive in its declarations, that satisfaction, or penance, is requisite to the remission of sin; while the universal practice of the Church of Rome, and the sentiments of her divines show, that sin may be forgiven without the *actual* performance of penance. How can they reconcile this apparent contradiction in the Church of Rome? There is but one mode of solving the difficulty: it is by supposing that *virtual* satisfaction, *i. e.* the *will* or *intention* of performing works of repentance, is accepted instead of *actual* satisfaction; when the latter cannot be performed. This would be merely carrying out the analogy of the received principle, that where sacraments cannot be obtained, the wish or intention of receiving them is sufficient for salvation. Now, on this principle, it is easy to answer the question propounded by Mr. Newman as the basis of the argument for purgatory. How, he asks, are satisfactions, which have not been made in

tentia post Concil. Trident. assignat tres actus pœnitentis, nempe contritionem, confessionem, et satisfactionem pro materia proxima sacramenti Pœnitentiæ; duos quidem priores pro materia *essentiali*, tertium vero, nempe satisfactionem, pro materia integrante." De Pœnitentia, tom. i. p. 108. And afterwards: "Sine illa (satisfactione) valet absolutio data pœnitenti contrito et confesso." Ibid. p. 118.

this life, to be expiated? I answer,—on his own principles,—If satisfaction has not, either actually or virtually, been performed, then, according to the doctrines of the Fathers and of the Council of Trent, *sin cannot be remitted*, and future punishment must be eternal: if, on the other hand, satisfaction has been virtually performed, that is to say, performed in will or intention, and God then calls away the penitent from this life, there is no more reason to suppose that He will inflict future temporal penalties on him for the want of actual satisfaction, than there is to imagine that He would consign to eternal punishment a believer who had just been baptized and had performed no actual good works, or who had departed with the wish to receive baptism and the Eucharist.

If "logical sequence" be, in reality, a test of a true development, it seems clear, that the doctrine of Purgatory is not a true development of the doctrines of post-baptismal sin and satisfaction. I am not now concerned to examine these doctrines as represented by Mr. Newman. Such an examination would involve a discussion more lengthened than I wish to enter on. It may be enough to record a protest against the notion that the primitive Church did not generally baptize infants; or that works of penance were considered to have any efficacy in procuring the remission of sin, independent of the principle of faith and repentance from which they flowed.

5. But it must not be forgotten, that the author of the Essay has provided *another* theory of Purgatory, which may possibly be more satisfactory than that which we have been considering. The former theory

derived the necessity of Purgatory from the accidental failure of some of the means of averting God's anger at sin[k]: it related to the case of those who are sinners, and as such deserving of eternal punishment. But the theory which we are now to consider, applies to a very different class.

"How Almighty God will deal with *the mass of Christians, who are neither very bad nor very good*, is a problem, which . . . when it has once forced itself upon the mind," obliges us in self-defence "to imagine modes, not by which God *does*, (for that would be presumptuous to conjecture) but by which He may solve the difficulty. *Most men*, to our apprehensions, are too unformed in religious habits either for heaven or for hell, yet there is no middle state when Christ comes in judgment. In consequence it is obvious to have recourse to the interval before His coming, as a time during which this incompleteness might be remedied . . . When the mind once allows itself to speculate, it will discern in such a provision a means whereby those, who, not without true faith at bottom, yet have committed *great crimes*, or those who have been carried off in youth while yet *undecided*, or who die after *a barren* though not an immoral or scandalous life, may receive such chastisement as may prepare them for heaven, and render it consistent with God's justice to admit them thither . . . The mind will inevitably dwell upon such thoughts, unless it has been taught to subdue them by education or by experience of their dangerousness[l]." Such theories as these, it seems, led men to examine Scripture on the subject; and "from

[k] Essay on Development, p. 414, 415. [l] P. 417, 418.

what was there found, and from the speculations of reason upon it, various notions have been hazarded;" for instance, "that there is a certain momentary ordeal to be undergone by all men after this life, more or less severe according to their spiritual state; or that certain gross sins in good men will be thus visited, or their lighter failings and habitual imperfections;" and certain texts in holy Scripture, such as, "The fire shall try every man's work," &c. and "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire," led the "early Christians" to believe in a purgatorial fire after death, by which such cases were provided for[m].

6. This theory, then, is based on the notion, that the great mass of men are neither very bad nor very good, and are, accordingly, unfitted either for heaven or hell. And the inference drawn is, that they must be purified by sufferings in the intermediate state. This certainly is, altogether, a very consolatory doctrine: it exempts from all fear of hell the majority of mankind, who live a merely "barren though not an immoral or scandalous life." It reverses our Lord's declaration, that "wide is the gate and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." Nor does it leave without hope, those who have combined belief in Christ with "great crimes." The doctrine of Purgatory was, according to the Essayist, derived from speculations on the probability of salvation in such cases as these; and although it is admitted that these speculations were "dangerous," there is no evidence that the doctrine of Purgatory does not meet their

[m] Essay, p. 419, 420.

requirements, and enable men to believe that salvation is attainable in such cases. If, indeed, the great mass of mankind, who according to human judgment are of no decided character, will be finally saved by means of purgatorial inflictions, there seems no reason whatever to close the door of hope on those who may have died in unrepented sin, after having performed some good works; or on those who have neither performed any good works, nor committed any grievous crimes.

7. How far these speculations;—how far the notion, that Purgatory is for the justification of those who are neither good nor bad, "neither hot nor cold;" who are of that new species of creatures unknown to the Gospel, who are servants at once of "two masters," of God and of Satan, of Righteousness and Sin; or still more strange, who are servants neither of the one nor the other;—how far the justification of such persons, without any process of repentance; without any satisfaction or penance; without the performance of good works; without any faith productive of good works; without charity, or any of the fruits of the Spirit; or at least, without some of these; is consistent with the doctrine of justification, as taught by the Council of Trent; it is indeed most difficult to comprehend.

Let us consider for a moment the doctrine of justification, according to the Tridentine definitions, in the language of Möhler.

"The Council of Trent describes justification to be an exaltation from the state of sinfulness to that of grace, and of adoption of the children of God; that is to say, an annihilation of the union of the will with the sinful Adam, a removal of original sin,

and of every other sin committed before justification, and the contraction of fellowship with Christ, the Holy and the Just One,—a state which is, in a negative sense, that of remission of sin, and in a positive sense, that of Sanctification. The Council further represents justification as a renewal of the inward man, by means whereof we become really just, as inherent in the believer, and as a restoration of the primeval state of humanity. On this account, the same synod observes, that by the act of justification, Faith, Hope, and Charity, are infused into the heart of man; and that it is only in this way he is truly united with Christ, and becometh a living member of his body. In other words, justification is considered to be sanctification and forgiveness of sins, as the latter is involved in the former, and the former in the latter: it is considered an infusion of the love of God into our hearts, through the Holy Spirit; and the interior state of the justified man is regarded as holy feeling,—as a sanctified inclination of the will; as habitual pleasure and joy in the Divine Law,—as a decided and active disposition to fulfil the same in all the occurrences of life—in short, as a way of feeling, which is in itself acceptable and well pleasing to God. When God declares man to be just and well-pleasing to Him, he really is so[n]."

This principle, of the essential connexion between forgiveness of sin and sanctification, faith and good works, holiness and salvation; has been always urged by the advocates of the Roman Church; and by none more earnestly, elaborately, and continually, than by the author of "the Essay on Development," in his

[n] Möhler, *Symbolik*, vol. ii. p. 147 (Engl. transl.).

former works, and his disciple, Mr. Ward. These writers have denounced the Reformation as heretical and anti-Christian, because, in their opinion, its doctrine of justification removed the necessity of good works to the remission of sins, acceptance with God, and salvation. Mr. Ward's "Ideal of the Christian Church," is based on this principle: the English Church—the Reformation in general—the Evangelical school—are all, in turn, the subject of denunciation, as teaching doctrines more wicked and blasphemous than those of Heathenism; and solely on this ground.

But how can we reconcile this doctrine of the Council of Trent and of its supporters, with the theory by which we have seen the existence of purgatory defended? If justification be necessarily productive of good works, or is necessarily united with sanctification, what can be said of a theory which supposes salvation to be attained by those who, at their death, are not in a state of sanctification or justification,—by those who have committed sins without subsequent contrition and works of satisfaction, or have not brought forth the fruits of good works? If persons dying without justification, and consequent sanctification, can be saved, it follows that persons may be saved without being united to Christ in this life, and consequently that belief in Christianity is non-essential; and, further, that future punishments are temporal, or do not exist at all. If, on the other hand, no one can be saved without having repented of sin and attained justification and *sanctification*, there is no middle class of men, who are neither good nor bad, and are unfitted for either heaven or hell: there are but two classes in this

life, the just and the unjust; and we have no right to infer that any of those who depart will be purified by temporal punishments.

8. But let us examine this very notion of purgatorial "punishments[o]." Do not penalties imply guilt? Do they not infer something which separates a soul from God? It is supposed that these purifying pains are necessary to reconcile the "justice" of God with His mercy[p]; that until they are endured, a soul is not *fit* for heaven, where nothing "defiled" can enter. The doctrine then implies, that *sin* is remitted in consequence of suffering the penalties of purgatory. How is it possible to reconcile this with the notion, that the mass of mankind, who are of an *undecided* character for good or evil, are the subjects of purgatorial pains? If the "justice" of God requires to be appeased,—if the soul is "defiled," and therefore unfit to enter heaven,—it is evidently sinful: it is not in any undecided state. In addition to this it may be observed, that it seems difficult to reconcile such a theory with the justice of God. How can it be imagined that He would inflict *any penalties* on persons who are supposed to be neither just nor *unjust?* All that unaided human reason can infer in such a case is, that such persons would never attain either heaven or hell, but would be consigned for ever to a middle state, which should be neither a reward of goodness nor a punishment of sin. The theory therefore goes to establish the *eternity* of a middle state, and is thus actually subversive of the notion of a purgatory, *i. e.* of temporary and purifying penalties.

9. We have now seen that the doctrine of Purgatory

[o] Essay, p. 422. [p] P. 418.

was, according to the statements of Mr. Newman, developed, first, from the doctrine of sin after baptism; and, secondly, from the doctrine of a middle class of men unfitted either for heaven or hell. And we have further seen, that these two theories concur in establishing the position, that sins which have not been remitted in this life, because unrepented of, are forgiven hereafter, when the pains of purgatory have been endured; that those who have not been justified or sanctified here, and have not brought forth good works, will, in a future life, after certain inflictions, be pardoned. The Roman Church has not defined the nature or extent of the penalties exacted in purgatory. It is indeed the received doctrine, and no one ventures openly to deny it, that those penalties are intense and horrible, and that they are of the nature of the torments of hell. But as this is not actually an article of faith, it is allowable for individuals to entertain the milder opinion, which limits such penalties to deprivations of enjoyments, and rejects the notion of positive inflictions. It is not difficult to see the effect which is likely to be produced on those who are thus led to think, that notwithstanding the urgency of their Church in demanding from them faith, good works, repentance, and sanctification in this life, they may in the end be saved without all or any of these conditions; when they shall, through God's mercy, have been subjected to certain temporal penalties, which may be neither lengthened nor grievous. I am unable to perceive, with the author of the Essay on Development, that the doctrine is likely to lead to any beneficial moral results. "Is a doctrine conceivable," he enquires, "which would so elevate the mind above

this present state, and teach it so successfully to dare difficult things, and to be reckless of danger and pain[q]?" The doctrine of the eternity of the penalties of sin,—the doctrine of the necessity of repentance, love, and good works in this life,—*seem*, certainly, to be more likely to lead to holy, and consistent, and self-denying practice, than the accommodating theories which are involved in the doctrine of purgatory, and which give to barren faith and impenitence the prospect of final salvation.

If Lutheranism or Calvinism be charged by the advocates of Rome with inculcating Antinomian doctrines, they can be at no loss for a reply, when the principles involved in the doctrine of purgatory are considered. If the Reformation had inculcated Antinomianism, it would have been merely following the example of Romanism; which, at the same time, is guilty of the excessive inconsistency of maintaining the absolute necessity of good works, and of insisting on the doctrine of the eternity of future punishments.

10. In fine, it is evident that the developments which have issued in the doctrine of purgatory are not true developments, but corruptions; because they are not characterized by "logical sequence," and because they have failed to preserve "the essential idea" of Christianity. That "essential idea" includes the doctrine of the eternal punishment of sin unrepented of in this life, and the necessity of repentance, faith, and sanctification before death. But the developments on which the doctrine of purgatory rests, subvert these doctrines, so essential to Christianity,

[q] Essay on Development, p. 422.

and establish the contradictory tenets of paganism and heresy.

It is in vain to produce, in reply to this, passages from certain of the earlier writers in support of some purgatorial fire after this life. The position of the Essayist is, that the doctrine of purgatory is not derived from Apostolical tradition; that it was only gradually wrought out by reasoning. If so, it must be tested by *reasoning*, and not by the doctrine of the Fathers. More especially is the author of the "Essay on Development" bound to reject the authority of those writers who recognized a purgatorial fire at the last day; because this view was built on the "literal" interpretation of such texts as "the fire shall try every man's work," which he has himself rejected as "heretical" in its principle.

## CHAPTER XII.

### DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORSHIP OF IMAGES AND RELICS—CONCLUSION.

1. In examining the developments of some of the particular doctrines and practices of the Church of Rome, it has not been deemed necessary to follow the order in which they are presented to the reader in the "Essay on Development." The more important of these tenets have been noticed in the first instance; and it now remains only to offer some remarks on the Worship of Images and Relics. If it can be shown that these practices, in addition to the Worship of Saints, and the doctrine of Purgatory, are false developments or corruptions, it will not be necessary to enter any further into the points in controversy between Romanism and its opponents.

The author of the "Essay on Development," supplies the reason for this. In reference to the mutual connexion of the doctrines of Romanism, he observes, "You must accept the whole or reject the whole: reduction does but enfeeble, and amputation mutilate. It is trifling to receive all but something which is as integral as any other portion[a]." And if, accord-

[a] Essay on Development, p. 154.

ing to this writer, "the doctrines altogether make up one integral religion," and "the several evidences which respectively support those doctrines belong to a whole[b]," so that those tenets which rest on weak arguments derive strength from those which are supported by strong; it may be also legitimately inferred, that if any of those tenets can be proved to be false or corrupt, the whole system which is identified with them must be rejected.

2. The worship of Images is discussed in two parts of the Essay, in reference to different tests of the truth of a development. In the first instance it is included amongst those practices which the Church has adopted from Paganism; and which, in virtue of that adoption, at once cease to be superstitious, or otherwise evil[c]. It is afterwards adduced as an instance of additions which are preservative of the course of development which had preceded them[d]. The argument employed in reference to the introduction of rites and tenets from heathen and heretical sources, is, that the Church always maintained the dogmatic principle or the necessity of holding the Catholic faith[e]—that it acted on fixed principles, and consequently in its contest with Paganism and Heresy subdued them, and despoiled them of whatever portion of truth they comprised[f]. There is "a certain *virtue* or *grace* in the Gospel which changes the quality of doctrines, opinions, usages, actions, and personal characters which become incorporated with it, and makes them right and acceptable to its Divine Author[g]." On this ground, the worship of

[b] Essay, p. 155.
[c] P. 360, 362.
[d] P. 433, 434.
[e] P. 339—345.
[f] P. 345—354.
[g] P. 354.

Images, which had been idolatrous under heathenism, is supposed to become lawful, notwithstanding the *admitted* rejection and condemnation of the worship of images by the early Church [h], by its simple *adoption* in Christianity, in the "eighth" century [i].

The Essayist does not seem to anticipate any objection to the principle on which this conclusion is founded—namely, the existence of some "virtue or grace" in Christianity which changes at once the quality of doctrines and usages; so that their mere *adoption* from false systems of religion into Christianity, at once makes them right and lawful. And yet, some sufficient proof might fairly have been expected for such a position as this. None, however, is given, except the mere fact that the "dogmatic principle" has always existed in Christianity—a position, which may be admitted, without being any nearer the proof of such "a virtue or grace," as the writer supposes to exist in Christianity. Whether this virtue be a mere power of excluding doctrines or practices contrary to what had been received by revelation; or whether it be a power of assimilating to the substance of Christianity what has been idolatrous or sinful when practised elsewhere; the dogmatic principle, *i. e.* the assertion of the necessity of holding the Catholic faith, does not seem to afford any security against the introduction of usages or tenets which are erroneous, and contradictory to the faith. The dogmatic principle may be fully held, where the most inconsistent doctrines are received. In the preceding chapter we have seen, that the principles of Polytheism have been admitted by those

[h] Essay, p. 356. [i] P. 362.

who stedfastly maintain the doctrine of Monotheism. *Inconsistency* may be quite as much an attribute of a theology founded on the dogmatic principle, as of any other. The advocates of such a theology may labour to explain away its contradictions, and yet may be wholly unsuccessful. So that there seems to be no kind of security, that doctrines or practices derived from Heathenism and Heresy, must necessarily cease to be heathen and heretical in principle, when they are adopted in a communion which holds the dogmatic principle.

The worship and rites which the Jesuits permitted to their converts from heathenism in China afford an illustration of what has been just said[j]. It cannot be alleged in this case, that the mere preservation of a dogmatical system, and the assertion of the necessity of believing in the orthodox faith, afforded any actual security against the introduction of idolatrous practices. In the case just mentioned, the Jesuits had, in the opinion of the Roman see, permitted the introduction of a new species of idolatry; yet there can be no doubt of their adherence to the dogmatical principle. On the other hand, the confession of a supreme Being is, as we have seen above, perfectly reconcileable with polytheism; and if so, it may be equally reconcileable with idolatry. It is evident that a species of worship may be adopted from heathenism which is idolatrous, though the dogmatical principle may be upheld. For instance, if the images of Saints were supposed to possess any divine virtue, or if trust and confidence were reposed in them; if they were worshipped with divine

[j] See Mosheim, cent. xvii. sect. 1, § 12, &c.; cent. xviii. § 3.

honours; if they received positive instead of relative worship; if the images of Christ or of the Father were honoured not relatively but directly with Latria; if they were sacrificed to, or prayers offered to them; in all such cases, it would be admitted by some Romanists that superstition or idolatry would be committed[k]; and yet all these usages or tenets would have been borrowed from heathenism, and modified by Christian ideas; and the existence and influence of the dogmatic principle might remain unchanged. It is indeed admitted by the Essayist, that the dogmatic principle does not necessarily, in all cases, prevent the introduction of false and superstitious tenets. "It is quite consistent with the tenor of these remarks," he says, "to observe, or allow, that real superstitions have sometimes obtained in parts of the Church from its intercourse with the heathen .. As philosophy has at times corrupted its divines, so has Paganism corrupted its worshippers[l]."

There is therefore no security in the existence of this dogmatic principle, that idolatry may not be introduced into the Church.

3. But, when we come to examine the doctrine of

[k] Dr. Milner, in reply to the charge of idolatry against Romanism, quotes the decree of the Synod of Trent cited above, and continues thus: "In conformity with this doctrine of our Church, the following question and answer are seen in our first Catechism for the instruction of children: 'Question. May we pray to relics or images? Answer. No; by no means; for they have no life or sense to hear or help us.' Finally, that work of the able Catholic writers, Gother and Challoner, which I quoted above (*the Papist Misrepresented and Represented*), contains the following anathema, in which I am confident that every Catholic existing will readily join: 'Cursed is he that commits idolatry; that prays to images or relics, or worships them for God. Amen.'" End of Controv. letter xxxiv.

[l] Essay, p. 363.

Image-worship in itself, it is evidently subversive of one of the essential ideas of Christianity. The worship of idols was denounced in all parts of the Old and New Testament, and by all the Fathers and Councils of the Church for many ages, as impious and abominable. But the advocates of Image-worship explain away all the texts on which alone it is possible to prove against the heathen that the worship of idols is a crime. According to these interpretations, there is no absolute prohibition in Scripture of the worship of idols in general.

"It may be reasonably questioned," says the author of the Essay on Development, "whether the commandment which stands second in our Decalogue, on which the prohibition of images is principally grounded, was intended for more than *temporary observance* in the letter[m]." "Departure from the letter may be no guilt to Christians[n]." It is argued by the advocates of Romanism, that the prohibitions of Image-worship in the Scriptures refer merely to the forms of idolatry then prevalent in the world; or to the *absolute* worship of images as distinguished from their *relative* worship; or to their worship *as gods*[o]. It is con-

[m] Essay, p. 434.

[n] P. 435.

[o] Thus Perrone observes on the second commandment: "Evidens igitur est, hic non agi nisi de imaginibus atque sculptilibus, deos falsos, astra aut animalia referentibus, quæ tunc temporis ubique gentium ac in Ægypto, et a Zabienis præsertim colebantur; ad quas idololatriæ species hic textus manifeste alludit. Ab his autem deterrere Deus populum suum volebat. Agitur propterea de cultu latriæ absoluto, qui nihil commune habet cum dogmate Catholico de imaginibus Christi aut Sanctorum, quæ coli non debent nisi cultu relativo." Tract. de Cultu Sanctorum, cap. v. Prælect. Theol. tom. iv. p. 398. Bellarmine says: "Sine dubio non prohibetur in Decalogo omnis imago, sed solum illa quæ dici potest *idolum*, id est, imago, quæ habetur *pro Deo*, vel quæ repræsentat tanquam Deum eam rem, quæ non est Deus." Bellar-

tended with some truth, that the heathen worshipped the idols of their false gods with direct and positive Divine honours—that they considered those idols as deities, or as inhabited by a Divine presence or power—that they put their trust in idols, and offered prayers and sacrifice to them[p]. It is ac-

min. de Reliquiis Sanctorum, lib. ii. c. vii. He remarks elsewhere, that Roman Catholics hold that, "Scripturas reprehendere cultum, qui tribuitur simulachris, *tanquam diis.*" Ib. cap. xi. Tournely (de Incarnat. p. 830) gives two interpretations: (1.) "Idololatria prohibetur, seu cultus imaginum aut simulacrorum, quæ vel pro diis habentur; vel in quibus tanquam dii coluntur, qui reipsâ dii non sunt; vel denique in quibus numinis aliquid aut divinæ virtutis latere creditur." (2.) "Lex vero illa positiva ad tempus fuit, non perpetua . . . eâ igitur lege non magis jam obstricti sumus, quam lege abstinendi a sanguine et suffocato." These interpretations, though not intended to have the effect of completely annulling the prohibition of the worship of idols, have actually that result.—For the distinctions of *Latria* and *Dulia*, *absolute* and *relative* worship, which the Romanists employ to evade the prohibitions of Scripture, see Bellarmin. de Imagin. Sanct. l. ii. c. 21—25. Tournely, de Incarnatione, quæst. xiii. Perrone, Prælect. Theol. vol. iv. Tract. de Cultu Sanctorum. Milner, End of Controversy, letter xxxiv.

[p] This line of argument was adopted in reply to Calvin, who had asserted (Institut. lib. i. c. xi.), that the heathen worship of idols was a *relative* worship, corresponding to that which Romanists professed to offer to images. Bellarmine (Lib. de Reliquiis Sanct. lib. ii. c. 13) proves that many of the heathen certainly did offer more than relative worship to idols; and that they believed them to be gods. It need only be added here, that both sides of the question are founded in truth; for it is indisputable that, while the more enlightened heathen offered a worship to idols which was intended to be referred to their prototypes, the great mass of the people looked on the idols themselves as gods. Thus Horace, in the well-known words,

"*Olim truncus eram ficulnus,*
*inutile lignum;*
*Cum faber incertus scamnum*
*faceretne Priapum,*
*Maluit esse Deum. Deus*
*inde ego.*"

The Holy Scriptures, and the ancient Christian writers, invariably speak of idols as the gods of the heathen. See Exod. xx. 23; xxxiv. 17; Isa. ii. 8; xliv.; Dan. v. 4; Jerem. x. See also Justin Martyr, Apolog. i. cap. ix.; Tertul. Apolog. c. xiii.; Lactantius, Divin. Instit. lib. ii. c. 2. 4.

The objections of Calvin had

knowledged by Romanists that such rites and doctrines are directly condemned by holy Scripture, and that they are, in fact, superstitious and idolatrous; but they hold, that if idols are not worshipped in *this* way, but with a *relative* worship, *inferior* to that which is due to the Supreme Being, it is not censurable, provided that worship be not in any case offered to the idols of *false* gods. On the whole, then, it may be concluded with probability from all these interpretations and explanations, that the worship of images or idols is right *in principle*, and reconcileable with Divine Revelation; and consequently it is in vain to argue against the worship of idols by the heathen at the present day from any passages of Scripture; for they will reply, that, on the principles of Christians themselves, such prohibitions were only intended to apply to certain forms of worship extant when the Scriptures were written; that they were merely designed for *temporary* observance; that they applied to those persons, and those only, who either looked on images as Deities, or worshipped them without any intention of honouring the gods whom they represented, or offered to them the very same degree of worship and adoration as is due to the *Supreme* God, or worshipped the images of *false* gods.

probably some influence in inducing the Council of Trent to draw a distinction between the worship of images in the Roman Church, and that of Pagans, in its decree, which declared that "Imagines Christi, Deiparæ, et aliorum Sanctorum, in templis præsertim habendas ac retinendas, eisque debitum honorem et reverentiam impertiendam: non quod credatur inesse in iis divinitas, vel virtus propter quam sint colendæ; vel quod ab iis sit aliquid petendum, vel quod fiducia sit in Imaginibus figenda, veluti olim fiebat a Gentibus, quæ in idolis spem suam collocabant; sed quoniam honos qui eis exhibetur, refertur ad prototypa, quæ illæ repræsentant." Concil. Trident. sessio XXV.

These distinctions would at once relieve a heathen from all difficulty, if he were pressed with arguments against idolatry derived from holy Scripture. He would readily admit, that a *relative* worship is due to idols; that a *higher* worship is due to the principal Deity than to secondary gods and idols; and that it is unlawful to worship false gods[q]. Thus then it would be evidently impossible to argue successfully on the principles of Romanists and of the Essayist, against heathen idolatry. Those principles render the declarations of Scripture wholly unavailing. We have already seen that, on the principles of the Essayist, it would be equally impossible to convince a heathen of the error of the doctrine of polytheism. And we shall presently see, that the same writer has advocated a doctrine, which amply justifies, on Christian grounds, the worship of inanimate objects, such as Idols, as well as that of animate objects. So that on the whole, Heathenism is very effectually justified by the doctrines of the "Essay on Development," and the practice of Image-worship and the principles on which it is founded, are thus plainly subversive of the "essential idea" of Christianity, which, undoubtedly, involves the condemnation of heathen religions as impious and idolatrous.

[q] "Celsus demanded, 'Whether any man, unless he were a very child, did think these things (idols) to be Gods, and not monuments and images of the Gods?'" See Ussher's *Answer to a Jesuit*, chap. x. p. 436. "Non ipsa, inquiunt, timemus, sed eos, ad quorum imaginem ficta, et quorum nominibus consecrata sunt." Lactant. (Div. Inst. lib. ii. c. 2), Eusebius (Præp. Evang. l. iv.), Arnobius (lib. vi.), and Augustine (in Psal. cxiii.), have also noticed this distinction. See also Calvin, Institut. Christ. Relig. l. i. c. xi. 8—11. Chamier, *Panstrat. Catholica*, tom. ii. l. 21. It is obvious that any intelligent heathen would make the same distinctions which Romanists have done, in justifying the worship of images.

4. This subject opens still more upon us, as we proceed in the investigation of the Romish developments: it receives additional light from a consideration of the theory on which, according to the Essayist, the worship of *Relics* was introduced into the Christian Church.

The worship of Relics is, according to this writer, a development of the doctrine of the Resurrection. The connexion, indeed, does not appear very obvious; nor is the Essayist "aware of any passage" in the writings of the Fathers, "in which the religious observance of Relics is clearly connected with the doctrine of the Resurrection, from which it *undoubtedly* proceeds[r]." The process of development is, however, thus explained. Christianity, it seems, in contrast to the doctrines of Platonists, Gnostics, and Manichees[s], "began by considering *matter* as a creature of God, and in itself very good." It regarded matter as being "susceptible of grace, or as capable of a union with a Divine presence and influence;" and accordingly believed, that God "had taken a portion" of matter upon Himself in the Incarnation "in order to its sanctification[t]." From this follows, *as a consequence*, "the sanctity of relics[u]." The heathen looked on the relics of the dead as polluted[v]; but Christians held them in reverence: "Nay, Christianity taught a reverence for the bodies even of heathen[w]." But "it was far more, of course, than such general reverence which they showed to the bodies of the saints. They ascribed virtue to their martyred tabernacles, and treasured, as something su-

[r] Essay on Develop. p. 388.
[s] P. 371.
[t] P. 370.
[u] P. 371.
[v] P. 372.
[w] P. 373.

pernatural, their blood, their ashes, and their bones[x]." Accordingly it seems, they were liable to the imputation of regarding the martyrs as "gods," and of offering them "Divine worship." The heathen and heretical opponents of Christianity affirmed that the worship paid to martyrs was equally distinct and formal with that which was paid to our Lord; and that the martyrs had been merely substituted for the idols of the heathen[y]. We are left to infer that these imputations were perfectly *just;* and that the relics of martyrs were the objects of Divine worship.

The connexion between the different members of this argument, if it can be called such, is somewhat obscure. The point to be shown was, that the worship of relics is an undoubted consequence of the doctrine of the *Resurrection.* In proof, we are referred to the union of matter with the Deity in the *Incarnation;* and from this the sanctity of relics in general—even of *heathen* relics—is inferred. The principle on which the inference depends is, apparently, simply this:—that *matter* has been sanctified by the Incarnation and Resurrection. We next learn, that Christians, in *consequence,* paid Divine honours to the relics of the saints and martyrs. Why they offered *greater* honours to the relics of the martyrs than to those of the heathen, is indeed wholly inexplicable on the supposition, that matter in general was sanctified by the Incarnation, and that this sanctification was the *ground* of the worship of relics: such an instance of partiality seems scarcely reconcileable with the general principle of the sanctification of matter. However, admitting that Christians

[x] Essay, p. 373.

[y] P. 374.

were justified in making such a distinction, by certain reasons peculiar to themselves, the general doctrine of the author is certainly calculated to throw a new light on the question of Heathenism.

5. If, as he argues, the goodness or sanctification of *matter*, (whether arising from the Incarnation or the Resurrection, or from any other cause,) be a ground for worshipping with Divine honours the relics of the dead, it follows necessarily and *à fortiori*, that the bodies of the *living* may be worshipped also. And further, since matter is not restricted to rational beings, it follows, that irrational animals, and even insensible objects, may be also worshipped. On this principle, then, I know not how we are to blame those who offered sacrifices to human beings, or who worshipped oxen, rams, crocodiles, beetles, and serpents. The Roman emperor who claimed Divine honours, only applied in his own case the doctrine of the Essayist; and if, instead of merely elevating his horse to the Consulate or the Priesthood, he had enjoined religious worship to be paid to him; or if the early Christians had really been worshippers of the patient and laborious animal who was considered by the heathen to be the object of their adoration[z]; it would have been perfectly justifiable on the theory under consideration. Every such case is amply provided for, by the doctrine of the propriety of offering worship to relics, in consequence of the union of *matter* with the Godhead.

[z] Vide Tertul. Apologet. c. xvi. "Nam ut quidam somniastis caput asininum esse Deum nostrum, hanc Cornelius Tacitus suspicionem ejusmodi inseruit . . . Hoc forsitan improbandum, quod inter cultores omnium pecudum bestiarumque, asinarii tantum sumus." This imputation was repeated by Plutarch.

Nor have we by any means arrived at the conclusion of this prolific principle; for, on the same grounds, the adoration of the Heavenly bodies, of the Earth, of rivers, wells, trees, stones, or any other objects of Fetiche-worship, becomes immediately justifiable. Even the Phallic worship (setting aside its gross immoralities) is at once exempted from all reasonable objections. Of course, the adoration of Images and Idols, without any needless distinctions of absolute or relative worship, is at once established; and the Essayist must have taken superfluous trouble in deducing the lawfulness of this practice as above, from that "assimilative" power of Christianity, which, by the mere adoption of Pagan rites, changes their nature, at once, from evil to good. If the doctrine here laid down to justify the worship of relics be valid, it is plain, that the Pagan worship of images was in itself right *in principle;* and therefore it is needless to suppose, that it requires any correction when adopted by Christians, except in detail. In truth it becomes a very nice question, whether primitive Christianity, which certainly excluded all images from its public worship, can, on such a view, be excused from the imputation of serious error. The Essayist seems not to have been fully aware of the capabilities of his theory, or he would not have attempted to found the worship of Images on a different principle from that of the worship of Relics. The result, however, of the doctrine which he has inculcated, is this: that every Material Existence in nature may be an object of religious worship, on account of the union of matter with the Deity in the Incarnation; and this is evidently nothing more than a modification of Pantheism, in combination with certain Christian doctrines.

6. We may now bring this brief examination of the Romish system to a close. It has not been possible to enter on all the topics which the Essay has suggested in reference to this subject; but enough perhaps has been said on the leading peculiarities of Romanism to show, that whatever of truth may still be retained in the Church of Rome, it is surrounded by much that is not true. The inconsistency of the grounds on which the Romish tenets have been maintained, affords very strong presumptive evidence against them. If those tenets had really been revealed; if they had formed a part of the truth taught by our Lord and His Apostles, we should not have found their advocates so totally at variance amongst themselves on the important question—whether these tenets were derived from apostolic tradition and always held in the Universal Church; or whether they were unknown in the primitive ages, and reasoned out in later times. And when we combine with this, the plain and evident fact, that Romanism has, by the position which it has assumed in controversy with the Reformation, been obliged to adopt a course of argument, in reference to the Scriptures, and to testimony in general, which leaves it wholly powerless when confronted by Infidelity; when we further remember, that the principles on which the worship of Saints and Angels is justified, are identical with those of the Arian heresy, and open the door to the doctrines and practices of Polytheism, so that it is no longer possible on Romish principles to offer any valid objections to Paganism; when it is also borne in mind, that, by its doctrine of Purgatory, the future penalties of sin cease to be alarming, and the need of repentance and sanctification in this life be-

comes in the highest degree questionable; when we have further seen, that the worship of Images and Relics justifies, in the fullest way, all the grossest forms of heathen idolatry; when we thus perceive the incapacity of Romanism to maintain the cause of Christianity against Rationalism and Infidelity on the one hand, or Paganism on the other; there surely can be no reasonable doubt, that a system which thus leaves revealed truth without defence against its various opponents, is not a true development of Christianity. Faith in Divine Revelation compels us to arrive at this conclusion; because it is incredible, that a true development of what has been revealed by God, can issue in depriving it of all evidences of having been so revealed, and render it indistinguishable in point of authority from rival systems of false religion.

Romanism holds its sway over the minds of most of its adherents in virtue of the persuasion which it has assiduously inculcated, that belief in Christianity is wholly dependent on belief in the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church. This persuasion ought not, at least, to be a blind and unreasoning one. If men assert, that there is no reasonable ground for believing the Gospel, unless the infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church be admitted as a necessary preliminary, they should be prepared to prove the truth of this assertion. We should be perfectly willing to let all the questions between Romanism and the Reformation rest on the issue of such an inquiry. If Romanism *alone* could establish the truth of Christianity against Heathen, Jewish, and Philosophical infidelity—nay, if it even could sustain the cause of Christianity by arguments as consistent

as those which have been employed by its opponents, we might safely undertake to admit its claims at once; but if, on the other hand, it can be shown, that Romanism is incapable of establishing the truth of Christianity; that it is so incapacitated, by its opposition to the leading principles and doctrines of the Reformation; while those who maintain such principles and doctrines are in a position, which enables them with perfect consistency to maintain the truth of the Christian Revelation, and to uphold its doctrines against all who may deny its authority or pervert its meaning; if this be indeed the real state of the case, there surely cannot be any reasonable doubt as to *where* Divine Revelation has been preserved and handed down in its simplicity and integrity; and *where* those developments may be found, which do not corrupt the original ideas of Christianity.

It has been attempted in the first Part of this work, to show that Rationalism, and Mysticism, and Romanism, cannot be true developments of the Gospel: it will be the object of the succeeding Part to examine the position which is occupied by those who are opposed to Rationalism, and the various forms of religious Anarchy, on the one hand; and to Superstition, whether Pagan or nominally Christian, on the other.

# APPENDIX.

## MÖHLER'S AND DE MAISTRE'S DOCTRINE OF DEVELOPMENT.

I HAVE reserved for separate consideration, the theories of Möhler and De Maistre, to which Mr Newman has referred in general terms in his "Essay on Development," as bearing some resemblance to his own. "The view" on which his work has been written, has, "he believes, recently been illustrated by several distinguished writers of the Continent, such as De Maistre and Möhler." (p. 27.) I am not aware that any other reference is made to the works of these writers in the Essay on Development; but as it is generally supposed that the theory advocated in Mr. Newman's volume, is substantially the same with those of De Maistre and Möhler, it is certainly a question of some interest to determine how far these three writers have adopted the same view.

I shall commence with some account of Möhler's Theory of Development. I have not observed in his "Athanasius," any passages which deserve particular notice as bearing on this subject: but his "Symbolik," and his treatise on "the Unity of the Church," comprise various details which convey distinct notions of his doctrine of development.

The Development of Christian doctrine, according to Möhler, refers only to its *form* and not to its *substance*, the latter, as he conceives, being immutable, and being at

all times preserved by tradition, which is described as "the general sense" of the Church. The following extracts will sufficiently exemplify the views of this writer in reference to the immutability of the Church's Creed, and to her possession of the idea of Christianity even from the beginning.

"The main question which we have now to answer, is this: how doth man attain to possession of the true doctrine of Christ? or, to express ourselves in a more general, and at once more accurate manner, how doth man obtain *a clear knowledge* of the institute of salvation proffered in Christ Jesus? The Protestant says, by searching Holy Writ, which is infallible: the Catholic, on the other hand, replies, by the Church, in which alone man arrives at the true understanding of Holy Writ. In a more minute exposition of his views the Catholic continues:—doubtless the Sacred Scriptures contain *divine* communications, and consequently, the pure truth: whether they contain *all* the truths, which in a religious and ecclesiastical point of view are necessary, or at least very useful to be known, is a question which does not yet come under consideration. Thus, the Scripture is God's unerring word; but however the predicate of inerrability may belong *to it, we ourselves* are not exempt from error; nay, we only become so when we have unerringly received the word, which is in *itself* inerrable. In this reception of the word, human activity, which is fallible, has necessarily a part. But, in order that, in this transit of the divine contents of the Sacred Scriptures into possession of the human intellect, no gross illusion or general misrepresentation may occur, it is taught, that the Divine Spirit, to which are entrusted the guidance and vivification of the Church, becomes, in its union with the human spirit in the Church, a peculiarly Christian tact, a deep sure-guiding feeling, *which, as it abideth in truth, leads also into all truth* . . .

"This is the ordinary and regular course. But errors and misunderstandings, more or less culpable, will never fail to occur; and as in the time of the Apostles, the word of God was combated out of the word of God, so this

combat hath been renewed at all times. What, under such circumstances, is the course to be pursued? How is the Divine word to be secured against the erroneous conceptions that have arisen? *The general sense decides against particular opinion*—the judgment of the Church against that of the individual: *the Church interprets the Sacred Scriptures.* The Church is the body of the Lord: it is, in its universality, His visible form—His permanent, ever-renovated humanity—His eternal revelation. He dwells in the community; all His promises, all His gifts are bequeathed to the community—but to no individual, as such, since the time of the Apostles. *This general sense, this ecclesiastical consciousness is tradition, in the subjective sense of the word.* What then is tradition? The peculiar Christian sense existing in the Church, and transmitted by ecclesiastical education; yet this sense is not to be conceived as detached from its subject-matter—nay, it is formed in and by this matter, so it may be called a full sense. Tradition is the living word, *perpetuated in the hearts of believers.* To this sense, as the general sense, the interpretation of Holy Writ is entrusted. The declaration which it pronounces on any controverted subject, is the judgment of the Church; and therefore the Church is judge in matters of faith (*judex controversiarum*). Tradition, in the objective sense, is *the general faith of the Church through all ages,* manifested by outward historical testimonies; in this sense, tradition is usually termed the *Norma;* the standard of Scriptural interpretation—the rule of faith." § xxxviii. vol. ii. p. 32—36. In reference to the controversies with the Gnostics who professed to find their doctrines in holy Scriptures, Möhler says, "As the impossibility was now manifest of convincing the Gnostics of the truth out of Holy Writ, must the Catholic Church declare that the questions whether God created the world, whether Christ were a true man, should remain in abeyance, till these doctrines were made evident to them by the testimony of Scripture? By no means. They were directed to tradition—to the living word; they were told that, if even a doubt could arise as to the doctrine of

Scripture, the announcement of the word *perpetuated in the Church since her first establishment, and the common faith of believers,* decided the question clearly enough." § xxxix. vol. ii. p. 41.

The principles on which the Church opposed the doctrine of Artemon and the first Unitarians, is thus described: "The faith existing in the Church, *from the beginning, throughout all ages, is the infallible standard to determine the true sense of Scripture;* and accordingly it is certain, beyond the shadow of doubt, that the Redeemer is God, and hath filled us even with divine power . . . He who, if even he should not believe the truth, yet believes truly, believes at the same time that he holds just the doctrine of Christ, that he shares the faith with the Apostles, *and with the Church founded by the Redeemer; that there is but one faith in all ages, and one only true one.*" § xxxix. vol. ii. p. 44, 45.

He afterwards remarks, that "the certainty which" the Church "has of the truth of her doctrines, is an immediate one, for *she received her dogmas from the lips of Christ and the Apostles;* and by the power of the Divine Spirit, they are indelibly stamped on her consciousness, or, as Irenæus expresses it, on her heart. If the Church were to endeavour, by learned investigation, to seek her doctrines, she would fall into the most absurd inconsistency, and annihilate her very self . . . *The essential matter of Holy Writ is eternally present in the Church,* because it is her heart's blood—her breath—her soul—her all. She exists only by Christ, and yet she must have to find Him out! Whoever seriously reflects on the signification of these words of Christ, 'I am with ye even to the consummation of the world,' will be able to conceive at least the view which the Catholic Church takes of herself." § xlii. vol. ii. p. 60.

These extracts will have sufficiently shown the fundamental doctrine of Möhler, with reference to the transmission of the Christian religion throughout the successive generations of the Church. He is of opinion, that there has at all times been "a general sense," or idea of Christian doctrine in the Universal Church, which has never

varied, and which has been, and is, the infallible interpreter of Holy Scripture. He has no notion of variations in faith, or of an imperfect comprehension of the *idea* of Christianity in the primitive ages.

There is, according to him, "a general faith of the Church throughout all ages,"—a "common faith of believers,"—an infallible faith existing "from the beginning," which is "one in all ages," and is the only "true one." This faith was not reasoned out, but was "received from the lips of Christ and the Apostles." It is "eternally present in the Church." It would be impossible to state with more precision and clearness, the principle, that as the Catholic faith is one and unalterable in substance, so it was revealed and held in its plenitude even from the beginning.

We are now to see the Theory of Development which Möhler has founded on these principles.

"If we have hitherto shown that, conformably to the principles of Catholics, *the doctrine of Scripture is one and the same with the doctrine of the Church*, since the Church hath to interpret the Scripture, and in this interpretation cannot err; so *this unity applies to the substance only, and not to the form.* In respect to the *latter*, a diversity is found inherent in the very essence and object of the Church; so that, indeed, if the Divine truth must be preserved and propagated by human organs, the diversity we speak of could not possibly be avoided, as will appear from the following observations. The conduct of the Redeemer, in the commencement of His word, was corresponded to by that of the Apostles, and the word became immediately in them faith—a human possession—and after His ascension existed for the world in no other form than in this faith of the Lord's disciples, whose kernel in Peter he therefore called the rock whereon His Church was, in such a way, to be built, that the powers of hell should never prevail against it. But, after the Divine word had become human faith, it must be subject to all mere human destinies. It must be constantly received by all the energies of the human mind,

and imbibed by the same. The preservation and communication of the word were, in like manner, attached to a human method. Even with the Evangelist, who only wished to recount what Christ had spoken, wrought, and suffered, the Divine word appears subject to the law here described; a law which manifests itself in the choice and arrangement of the matter, as well as in the special plan which each proposed to himself, and in the general conception and execution of his task.

"But the Divine word became still more subject to this law, when the Apostles were fulfilling their mission—executing the Divine charge which they had received; for, various questions of dispute arose, the settlement whereof could not be avoided, and on that account claimed human reflection, and required the formation of notions, judgments, and conclusions—things which were not possible to be effected, without tasking the reason and the understanding. The application of the energies of the human mind to the subject-matter received from the Lord, necessarily caused *the Divine word to be analyzed, and on the other hand, to be reduced to certain leading points; and the multiplicity of objects to be contemplated in their mutual bearings, and resolved into a higher unity, whereby the human mind obtained, on these matters, greater clearness and definiteness of conception.* For, every thing that the human mind hath received from an external source, and which is destined to become its property, wherein it must find itself perfectly at home, must be first reproduced by the human mind itself. *The original doctrine*, as the human mind had variously elaborated it, *exhibited itself in a much altered form:* it remained the original, and yet did not; *it was the same in substance, and yet differed as to form.* In this process of the development of the Divine word during the Apostolic age, we may exalt as high, and extend as wide as we please, the Divine guidance given to the disciples of Christ; yet certainly, without human co-operation, without the peculiar activity of man, it did not advance of itself. As in the good work of the Christian, free will

and grace pervade each other, and one and the same undivided deed is at once Divine and human, so we find this to be the case here.

"The same could not fail to hold good, even after the death of the Apostles, even after the Gospels and the Epistles were written, and whatever else we include in the canon of the New Testament, were already in the hands of the faithful. When, in the manner described, *the Church explains and secures the original doctrine of faith against misrepresentations, the apostolic expression is necessarily changed for another*, which is the most fitted alike clearly to set forth and reject the particular error of the time. As little as the Apostles themselves, in the course of their polemics, could retain *the form* wherein the Saviour expounded His Divine doctrine, so little was the Church enabled to adhere to the same. If the evangelical doctrine be assailed by a definite theological system, and a terminology peculiar to itself, the false notions cannot by any means be repelled in a clear, distinct, evident, and intelligible manner, unless the Church have regard to the form of the error, and exhibit its thesis in a shape qualified by the garb wherein the adverse doctrine is invested, and thus render itself intelligible to all contemporaries. The origin of the Nicene formula furnishes the best solution to this question. This *form* is in itself the human, the temporal, the perishable element, and might be exchanged for a hundred others. Accordingly, tradition often hands down to later generations the original deposit in another form, because that deposit hath been entrusted to the care of men, whose conduct must be guided by the circumstances wherein they are placed.

"Lastly, in the same manner as in the apostolic writings, the truths of salvation are laid open with greater clearness, and in all their mutual organic connexion; so, in the doctrine of the Church, the doctrine of Scripture is ever progressively unfolded to our view . . . Dull, therefore, as it is, to find any other than a mere *formal* distinction between the doctrine of Christ and that of his Apostles, no less senseless is it to discover any other difference between the

primitive and the later tradition of the Church. The blame of this formal difference arises from overlooking the fact, that Christ was a God-Man, and wished to continue working in a manner conformable to His twofold nature.

"Moreover, the *deeper insight* of the human mind into the Divine revelations in Christ, seems determined by the struggles of error against Christian truth. It is to the unenlightened zeal of the Jewish Christians for the law, we owe the expositions of Paul touching faith and the power of the Gospel; and to the schisms in Corinth we are indebted for his explanation of principles in respect to the Church. The Gnostic and Manichæan errors led to a clearer insight into the character of evil, destitute of, and opposed to, all existence as it is, as well as to a maturer knowledge of the value of God's *original* creation (nature and freedom), and its relation to the *new* creation in Christ Jesus. Out of the Pelagian contest arose a fuller and more conscious recognition of human infirmity in the sphere of true virtue; and so have matters gone on down to our days . . . .

"The fact that the deeper consciousness of Christian truth (*in itself eternally one and unchangeable*) is the result of contest and struggle, and consequently matter of history, is of too much importance not to detain our attention for some moments. It explains the necessity of a living, visible authority, which in every dispute, can, with certainty, discern the truth and separate it from error. Otherwise, we should have *only* the variable—the disputed—and, at last, Nichilism itself. Hence it happens (and this we may venture to premise), that where Holy Writ, without tradition and the authority of the Church, is declared to be the sole source and rule for the knowledge of Gospel truth, *all more precise explanations and developments of Christian dogmas* are willingly left in utter ignorance; nay, are even absolutely rejected. Guided by this principle, men can find no rational object to connect with the history of believing intelligence in the Christian Church, and must necessarily evince hostility towards every thing of this tendency, which hath occurred in the

Church. Or, when they lose all confidence and all hope of freeing themselves from the turmoil of opinions, and of seeing a bright steady light arise out of the dark chaos, they cast, in their despair, upon the Bible the whole mass of opinions that ages have thrown up; and of that which is, boldly assert it could not have been otherwise; consequently exists of necessity, and is inherent in the very essence of Christianity. They do not see that, with that complaisance to acknowledge every variety of opinion which in course of time may have been gradually founded on Scripture, a destructive principle for the solution of all the enigmas of Christian history is laid down: to wit, the principle that its object is to show, that the Scripture, as it includes *every* sense, hath consequently none. But all charges against the Catholic Church are reduced to this, that she has been so absurd as to suppose the Scriptures to contain one sense, and consequently only one, and that definite, whereof the faithful, in the course of history, must ever obtain a clearer and more intuitive knowledge." § xl. vol. ii. p. 49—54.

In the foregoing passages there is a degree of indistinctness in the statement of the doctrine of development, which arises from the introduction of different ideas in the process. In the first instance, and during the greater part of his remarks, the writer takes one view of development, but he subsequently diverges into another. His first position is, that the *substance* of Christian dogma alone remains invariable in all ages, while its *form or expression* must ever vary with the different minds by which it is received, and the rise of errors opposed to it. On this principle, the developments of Christian doctrine in the apostolic Epistles, and afterwards in the Church generally, are explained and accounted for—the definitions of the Church, such as the Nicene formula, being supposed to be merely various forms of the one dogma of the faith always received even from the beginning. This view was also adopted by Mr. Newman some years since.

But throughout Möhler's statements on this subject, there is a second theory continually introduced, which is

essentially different from the former, and is not very easily reconcileable with it at first sight. This theory is, that, although Christian doctrine was revealed at once, and although it has always been the universal sense and belief of the Church, yet the rise of questions and controversies caused the human mind to reduce the articles of Christian doctrine to a system; and that hence has arisen a progressively increasing clearness of insight into the relations of Christian truths, and generally into Divine Revelation.

As, however, this writer maintains, that the "received dogmas" of the Church are "eternally present" in her; and as he holds it to be "senseless" "to discover any difference between the primitive and the later tradition of the Church," except in mere *form*, it would seem that the "deeper insight," and "greater clearness and definiteness of conception," which he supposes to arise from controversies with error, has not any reference to the gradual discovery or deduction of articles of faith or doctrines unknown to the Church, or doubted or disputed, during the earliest stages of her existence. His notion seems to be, that, in the course of ages, a theological *system* may be wrought out of the dogmas always held in the Church, and that controversies lead to *more distinct and definite views of the doctrine controverted*, and of their relations to other doctrines. I do not see that Möhler's theory extends beyond this point.

Such, too, substantially, was the view which this writer adopted in his earlier work, "De l'Unité de l'Eglise." In reference to the benefits which result to the Church even from the existence of heresies, he quotes the following language of Origen:

"Si la doctrine Chrétienne était entièrement débarrassée des assertions des hérétiques, notre foi ne paraîtrait pas aussi éclatante, aussi bien affermie. Mais les contradictions assiégent la doctrine Catholique, afin que notre foi ne s'engourdisse dans le repos, mais que, sans cesse agitée par l'exercice, elle devienne pure; c'est ce qui fait dire à l'Apôtre, qu'il faut des hérésies, pour qu'on puisse reconnaître les Chrétiens éprouvés." P. 99. The following pas-

sage occurs afterwards: "St. Augustine parle des hérésies comme d'un moyen de donner un plus grand développement à la doctrine Chrétienne. Puisqu'il est écrit en toute vérité, dit-il (de Vera Rel. c. 15), qu'il doit y avoir des hérésies, afin que les hommes éprouvés parmi vous se manifestent, &c., employons à notre profit ce bienfait de la Providence divine. Car de telles personnes deviennent hérétiques qui seraient encore dans l'erreur, lors même qu'elles seraient encore dans l'Eglise. Mais quand elles n'y sont pas, elles sont très-utiles, non parce qu'elles enseignent la vérité, car elles ne la connaissent pas; mais elles excitent *ceux qui ont une foi sensuelle à examiner à fond la vérité, et les Catholiques spirituels à la faire paraître au grand jour.* Car il y a une infinité de personnes éprouvées par Dieu dans la Sainte-Eglise, mais elles ne se manifestent pas parmi nous *aussi long-temps que nous nous réjouissons de ténèbres de notre ignorance, et que nous aimons mieux à dormir qu'à contempler la lumière de la vérité.* C'est pourquoi que plusieurs sont *éveillés de leur sommeil par les hérétiques, afin qu'ils voient le jour de Dieu, et qu'ils se réjouissent.* Servons-nous donc aussi des hérétiques, non pour justifier leurs erreurs, mais pour défendre la doctrine Catholique contre leurs embûches et pour devenir *plus vigilants et plus attentifs,* quand même nous ne serions pas en état de les rappeler au salut. Voyez Enarr. in Ps. 68, n. 39, vulg. 67, où, par sa traduction qui ne rend pas exactement le texte Hébreu . . . il est amené à cette remarque pleine de justesse, que la connaissance du Christianisme se manifeste, se détermine, se développe davantage par la lutte avec les hérétiques. Chez les orfèvres, dit-il, on nomme *exclusores* ceux qui savent donner une certaine forme à une masse informe, qui de confusione massæ noverunt formam vasis exprimere. Car plusieurs des choses que renferme l'Ecriture-Sainte sont cachées et ne sont connues que de quelques personnes d'une pénétration extraordinaire, et l'on ne parvient mieux à les saisir et à les comprendre que lorsqu'on est obligé de répondre aux hérétiques. Car ceux-là mêmes qui n'ont point de goût pour l'étude, sont éveillés par là de leur engourdissement

et portent leur attention à réfuter leurs adversaires. Il revient souvent aux mêmes idées et paraît vouloir blâmer à dessein l'insouciance et la paresse, qui, par le défaut de pénétration et du libre mouvement de l'esprit, dégénère si souvent in erreur, fait naître l'erreur dans d'autres, mérite de justes reproches, n'est pas capable de les en convaincre, et dont la défense ne contient souvent que de nouveaux reproches."

"Enarrat. in Ps. 54, n. 2, il emploie la même image. 'Etenim ex hæreticis asserta est Catholica, et ex his qui male sentiunt probati sunt qui bene sentiunt. Multa enim latebant in Scripturis, et cum præcisi essent hæretici, quæstionibus agitaverunt Ecclesiam Dei. Unde dicuntur et in arte argentaria Exclusores, *i. e.*, ex quadam confusione massæ formæ expressores. Ergo multi qui optime possunt Scripturas dignoscere et pertractare, latebant in populo Dei, nec asserebant solutionem quæstionum difficilium, cum calumniator nullus instaret. Numquid enim perfecte de Trinitate tractatum est, antequam oblatrarent Ariani, numquid perfecte de pœnitentia tractatum est, antequam obsisterent Novatiani? Sic non perfecte de baptismate tractatum est, antequam contradicerent foris positi rebaptizatores, nec de ipsa unitate Christi (Unité de l'Eglise) enucleate dicta erant, quæ dicta sunt, nisi posteaquam separatio illa urgere cœpit fratres infirmos, *ut jam illi qui noverant* hæc tractare atque dissolvere, ne perirent infirmi, sollicitati quæstionibus impiorum, sermonibus et disputationibus suis obscura legis in publicum deducerent.' Voyez aussi Enarrat. in Ps. 7, n. 15. in Ps. 9, n. 20. et de Vera Rel. c. 25. 'Nunc agitur quibus credendum sit, antequam quis sit idoneus ineundæ rationi de divinis et invisibilibus rebus: nam ipsi rationi purgatioris animæ, quæ ad perspicuam Veritatem pervenit, nullo modo auctoritas humana præponitur: sed ad hanc nulla superbia perducit. Quæ si non esset, non essent hæretici, neque schismatici et carne circumcisi. *Hi autem si non essent ante perfectionem populi, quæ promittitur, multo pigrius veritas quæreretur.*'" p. 268, 269.

I have extracted this passage without curtailment, be-

cause it is valuable as exhibiting the sense of Christian Antiquity on the subject of Development. In the extracts which are here made from St. Augustine, it will be observed that these points are supposed:—that the Christian doctrine has always existed in the Church, *in substance;* that there have been always persons who perfectly understood this Christian doctrine; and that there have been also many who, through sloth or indifference, did not comprehend it. Heresy is, according to him, a means of bringing the latter to an improved knowledge of the Gospel, while it leads the more learned to give form and order to the doctrines always received in the Church, and to defend them against heresy by new arguments. Such is the development of Catholic doctrine contemplated by St. Augustine; which seems to be substantially the same as that which Möhler describes in his "Symbolik," as cited above.

With such views of the derivation of Christian doctrine from the Apostles, Möhler does not seem, in any of his writings, to put forward notions on Development which can be fairly regarded as corresponding to those of Mr. Newman. The whole body of faith and morality in the Church has, according to him, been preserved at all times. The only actual development, as implying the notion of expansion and augmentation of Christian ideas, of which he seems to speak, is the development of the Papal authority, on which we have already (p. 236) seen his statements.

The same remark, to some extent, holds good in reference to the Count de Maistre. This eloquent and plausible writer endeavours to obviate the difficulty presented by the early ecclesiastical history, in regard to the Papal Supremacy, by contending, that all institutions which are of long duration must develope themselves slowly and gradually. His theory, however, seems to be applied to the single point of the Papal Supremacy; and even in respect to this, he supposes the idea of the Papal primacy always to have formed part of the Church's faith; so that his theory is not intended, apparently, to do more than ac-

count for the progressive development of the *power* of the Roman see. The *doctrine* on which this power is based was not a development, according to De Maistre; and in this he appears to differ both from Möhler and Newman.

I subjoin some extracts from De Maistre's work, entitled "Du Pape," which will sufficiently explain his theory.

In reference to the doctrine of some Romanists, who place the supreme authority of the Church, not in the Pope, but in general councils, he says:

"Le monde est devenue trop grand pour les conciles généraux, qui ne semblent faits que pour la jeunesse du Christianisme. Mais ce mot de *jeunesse* m'avertit d'observer que cette expression et quelques autres du même genre se rapportent à la durée totale d'un corps ou d'un individu. Si je me représente, par exemple, la république Romaine, qui dura cinq cent ans, je sais ce que veulent dire ces expressions: *La jeunesse* ou *les premières années de la république Romaine;* et s'il s'agit d'un homme qui doit vivre à peu près quatre-vingts ans, je me réglerai encore sur cette durée totale; et je sais que si l'homme vivait mille ans, il serait jeune à deux cents. Qu'est-ce donc que la jeunesse d'une religion qui doit durer autant que le monde? On parle beaucoup des *premiers siècles du Christianisme:* en vérité, je ne voudrais pas assurer qu'ils sont passés.

"Quoi qu'il en soit, il n'y a pas de plus faux raisonnement que celui qui veut nous ramener à ce qu'on appelle les *premiers siècles,* sans savoir ce qu'on dit.

"Il serait mieux d'ajouter, peut-être, que dans un sens l'Eglise n'a point d'âge. La religion Chrétienne est la seule institution qui n'admette point de décadence, parce que c'est la seule divine. Pour l'extérieur, pour les pratiques, pour les cérémonies, elle laisse quelque chose aux variations humaines. Mais l'essence est toujours le même, *et anni ejus non deficient* . . . . Sans pousser plus loin ces observations, ne parlons pas tant des *premiers siècles, ni des conciles œcuméniques,* depuis que le monde est devenu si grand; ne parlons pas surtout des *premiers siècles,* comme si le temps avait prise sur l'Eglise. Les plaies

qu'elle reçoit ne viennent que de nos vices, les siècles, en glissant sur elle, ne peuvent que la perfectionner." p. 27, 28. The only variations which are here supposed to occur in the Christian religion, relate to external practices and ceremonies. Let us now come to his statement of the theory of development.

"Rien dans toute l'histoire ecclésiastique n'est aussi invinciblement démontré, pour la conscience surtout qui ne dispute jamais, que la suprématie monarchique du Souverain Pontife. Elle n'a point été, sans doute, dans son origine, ce qu'elle fut quelques siècles après; mais c'est en cela précisément qu'elle se montre divine: car tout ce qui existe légitemement et pour des siècles, existe d'abord en germe et se développe successivement." p. 31. This development, however, is, according to this writer, only the necessary result of the doctrine of Revelation itself, which teaches the supremacy of the chair of Peter.

"Bossuet a très-heureusement exprimé ce germe d'unité, et tous les priviléges de la chair de Saint Pierre, déjà visibles dans la personne de son premier possesseur." p. 31. A passage from Bossuet is then cited, in which the *scriptural* argument for the Papal Supremacy is stated; and reference is also made to the doctrine of the Fathers and Councils, in further proof. After which, De Maistre proceeds thus: "On ose à peine citer aujourd'hui les textes qui, d'âge en âge, *établissent la suprématie Romaine de la manière la plus incontestable, depuis le berceau du Christianisme jusqu'à nos jours.* Ces textes sont si connus, qu'ils appartiennent à tout le monde, et qu'on a l'air, en les citant, de se parer d'une vaine érudition. Cependant, comment refuser, dans un ouvrage tel que celui-ci, un coup d'œil rapide à ces monuments précieux de la plus pure tradition?" p. 33. Reference is then made to Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian, and others of the early Fathers, and also to the general councils, and the doctrines of certain Gallican divines; and the following conclusion is arrived at as the result of the inquiry: "En un mot, depuis l'aurore du Christianisme jusqu'à nos jours, on ne trouvera pas que l'usage ait varié. *Toujours les Papes ont re-*

*gardés comme les chefs suprêmes de l'Eglise, et toujours ils en ont déployé les pouvoirs.*" p. 45.

These statements of this advocate of the theory of development are directly contradictory to those of Möhler and Newman, who deny that the Papal power existed at the beginning, and prove that it was *impossible* that it could have existed for some ages (see above, p. 236—240).

While, however, De Maistre maintains that the doctrine of the Papal Supremacy was received and acted on from the very commencement of Christianity, he supposes that its prerogatives were only gradually discovered, and that St. Peter himself may not have comprehended them. In reply to the Gallicans who urged that the Pope could not be infallible, because Papal decisions were *examined* by Councils before they were received, he says:

"La plupart des écrivains Français, depuis le temps surtout où la manie des constitutions s'est emparé des esprits, partent tous, même sans s'en apercevoir, de la supposition d'une loi imaginaire, antérieure à tous les faits, et qui les a dirigés; de la manière que si le Pape, par exemple, est souverain dans l'Eglise, *tous les actes de l'histoire ecclésiastique doivent l'attester en se pliant uniformément et sans effort à cette supposition, et que dans la supposition contraire, tous les faits de même doivent contredire la souveraineté.*

"Or, il n'y a rien de si faux que cette supposition, et ce n'est point ainsi que vont les choses: jamais aucune institution importante n'a résulté d'une loi, et plus elle est grande, moins elle écrit. Elle se forme elle-même par la conspiration de mille agents, qui presque toujours ignorent ce qu'ils sont; en sorte que souvent ils ont l'air de ne pas s'apercevoir du droit qu'ils établissent eux-mêmes. L'institution végète ainsi insensiblement à travers les siècles; *crescit occulto velut arbor ævo:* c'est la devise éternelle de toute grande creation politique ou religieuse. Sainte Pierre avait-il une connaissance distincte de l'étendue de sa prérogative et des questions qu'elle ferait naître dans l'avenir? Je l'ignore. Lorsque après une sage discussion, accordée à l'examen d'une question importante à cette époque, il

prenait le premier la parole au concile de Jérusalem, et que *toute la multitude se tut*, Saint Jacques même n'ayant parlé à son tour du haut de son siége patriarcal, que pour confirmer ce que le chef des Apôtres venait de décider, Saint Pierre *agissait-il avec ou en vertu* d'une connaissance claire et distincte de sa prérogative ; ou bien, en créant à son caractère ce magnifique témoinage, n'agissait-il que par un mouvement intérieur séparé de toute contemplation rationelle ? Je l'ignore encore." p. 88, 89.

It would seem that the view taken in this passage bears a considerable resemblance to that of Mr. Newman. It solves the difficulties of Ecclesiastical History in reference to the Papal Supremacy, by supposing that the Supremacy was not the result of *any law or principle consciously held from the beginning*, but of the involuntary agency of individuals in successive ages, who were ignorant of the results and tendencies of their acts. This gradual progress arising from the course of events, which De Maistre applies to the doctrine of the Papal Supremacy, is by Mr. Newman applied to Christian doctrine in general. But it certainly seems a very strange degree of inconsistency in the former writer ; who, as we have seen, asserts in the most positive way, elsewhere, that the Papal Supremacy was founded on holy Scripture ; that all the Fathers attested it ; and that the Popes even from the first *exercised* it. All this goes directly to prove that the Papal Supremacy was a law or principle which was at all times *consciously* held in the Church—which, in fact, formed an article of her faith. A law, then, with reference to the see of Rome, *there was, on his own showing ;* and this being the case, the fact, alleged by the Gallicans, that the Papal decrees were not received by councils without examination, is a valid objection to the Papal infallibility, as showing that it was not recognized by the early Church as included in the idea of the authority of the Roman see.

On the whole I think it is evident, that Mr. Newman has derived from Möhler and De Maistre, little more than the general idea of development ; and that these writers present that idea in a very different form, without the im-

portant details and consequences which Mr. Newman has connected with it; and certainly in much more harmony with the established principles of Roman Catholic theology. It seems, on the whole, that the "Essay on Development" may fairly lay claim to originality both in its general theory and in its details.

THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

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